

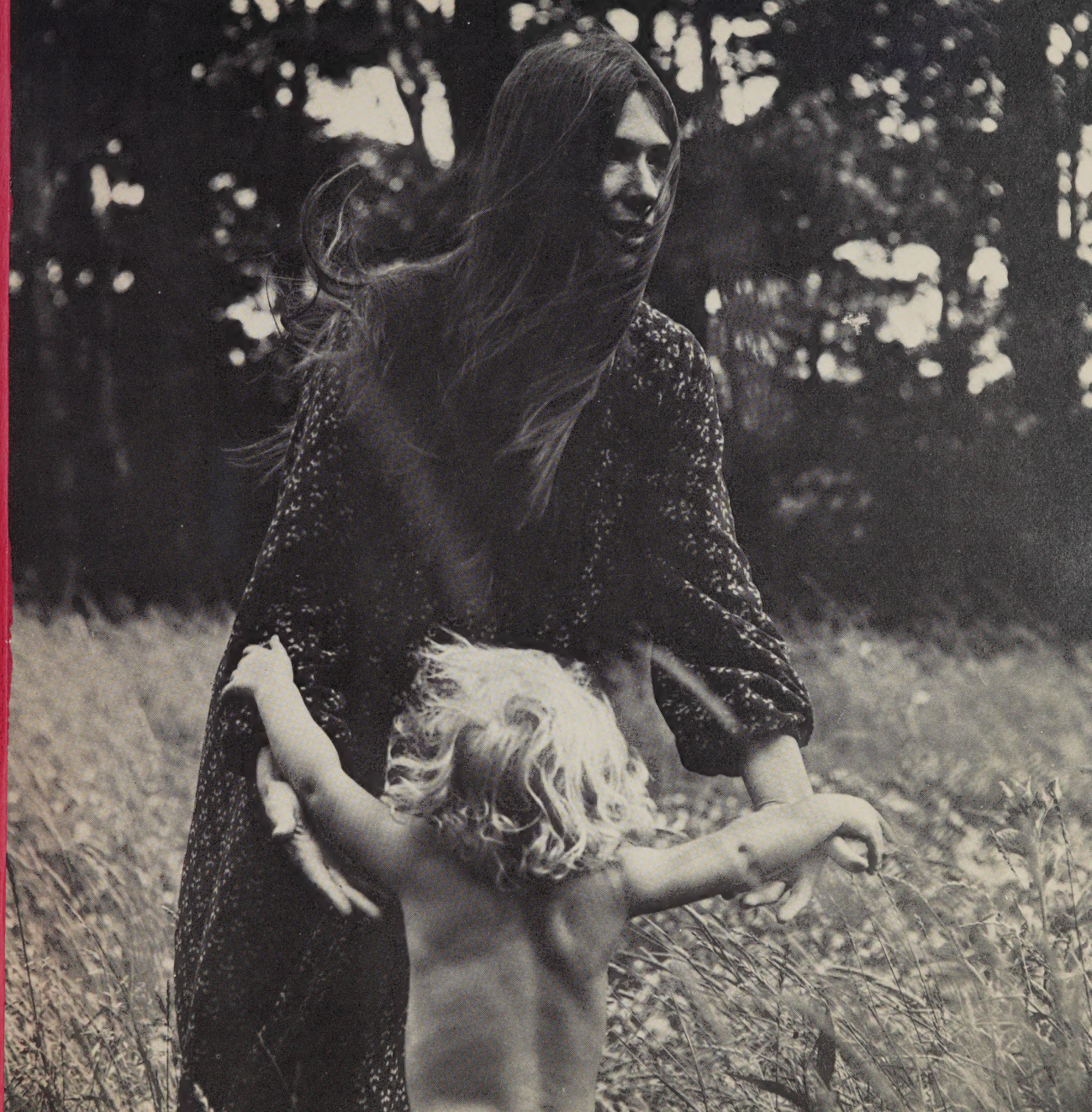
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TO SEE OURSELVES

five views
on
Canadian
women






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TO SEE OURSELVES

five views on Canadian women

by
Sheila Arnopoulos
Sharon Brown
Dian Cohen
Margaret Daly
Katherine Govier

International Women's Year Secretariat
Privy Council Office

Marc Lalonde



Minister responsible
for the Status of Women

Ministre chargé de la
situation de la femme

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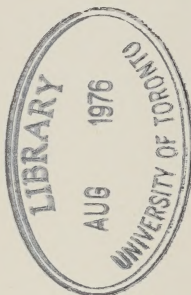
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Catalogue No. S2-48/1975

Issued under the authority of
International Women's Year Secretariat
Privy Council Office
Government of Canada
Ottawa

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Shirley T. Popham
DESIGN: Peggy Steele Kitcher



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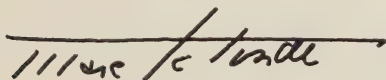
FOREWORD

When the United Nations declared 1975 as International Women's Year the Government of Canada responded by initiating a wide variety of programs towards the improved integration of women into all economic, cultural and social spheres of our society.

As Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, I have been pleased to initiate many aspects of this program including those administered by the International Women's Year Secretariat, Privy Council Office. This Secretariat was set up on a short-term basis to generate a greater awareness of the status of women and to work towards changes in attitudes so that all Canadians will have equal opportunities, equal rights and equal responsibilities.

One project of the Secretariat is this book, *To See Ourselves*. It includes five articles by Canadian authors who have delineated the situation of five major groups of women in Canada. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and the women interviewed and do not necessarily represent government policy. They are valid statements, adding to our understanding of the problems confronted by Canadian women.

I am pleased to sponsor this publication for International Women's Year, 1975.



Marc Lalonde
Minister Responsible for the
Status of Women
Ottawa



INTRODUCTION

To See Ourselves began modestly. The original idea was to have five top Canadian writers prepare papers which, in viewing Canadian women from various perspectives, would give an accurate, but informal picture of the current status of Canadian women.

Letters went out to writers who might be interested, asking them to examine statistical and other research materials, to conduct personal interviews, and in doing so, to take a thorough, but dispassionate look at the present situation, and try to assess the outlook for the near future among five groups of Canadian women. The responses were enthusiastic. Soon, Sheila Arnopoulos was busy investigating the majority of working women, those who labour at non-professional jobs. Sharon Brown was entering into the private homes and lives of homemakers. Dian Cohen was delving into the statistics and exposing the myths of women in the professions. Margaret Daly was probing the poverty that disadvantages so many women. And Katherine Govier was trying to read and interpret the still-developing mind of the young woman.

In the course of events, two things happened which resulted in *To See Ourselves*. As the writers began researching and interviewing, the concepts grew in scope and complexity. It was originally intended that copies of the papers, when completed, be duplicated and made available to interested people. As the first drafts arrived, it was apparent that these five profiles would have greater impact and would reach a wider audience if they were published together.

What's more, keen-eyed visualists in the office of the International Women's Year Secretariat began to see how photographic possibilities would back up and enhance the writers' statements. In no time, the office

was filled — chairs, tables, walls — with the dynamic black-and-white prints of photographers Edith Dalschen, Vivian Frankel, Pamela Harris and Ellen Tolmie. Graphic designer Peggy Steele Kitcher delivered her ideas and imagination to the layout, and the team was complete.

A final word should be said about style: no attempt was made to impose or achieve uniformity of style, approach or content in these five views of women. The style, statements and opinions in each essay are those of either the persons interviewed or the individual author.

Thus, *To See Ourselves* emerged — a book about women, by women, but for women *and* men.

International Women's Year Secretariat
Privy Council Office

THE NON-PROFESSIONAL
WORKING WOMAN

SHEILA ARNOPOULOS



The Bottom Rung of the Labour Ladder

THE NON-PROFESSIONAL WORKING WOMAN

SHEILA ARNOPOULOS

INTRODUCTION

Cathy, 26 and separated, worked in a Nova Scotia chocolate factory, where she packed chocolates for up to 13 hours a day at minimum wage with two unpaid half-hour breaks to eat. "It was a terrible job... I got out a few months ago because I couldn't stand it... but I'm afraid the job I have now won't last and I'll have to go back." The mandatory overtime, she said, played havoc with her home life. "Two days a week, I had to work 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. I wouldn't see my four-year-old for 48 hours. When I got up, he'd be asleep and when I came home, he'd have gone to bed." Cathy said she was "lucky" because she had a good day-care arrangement and a helpful neighbour. Day care in Nova Scotia is minimal, and some women she worked with "boarded" their children 20 miles from Halifax and saw them "only on weekends."

Cathy felt the worst thing about the factory, which employed predominately women, was the pressure. "Packing chocolates is such a menial task it needs no real concentration. So they can speed up the work without losing quality and the entire pressure is on us. When we first started, three of us were doing 27 boxes a minute. The next day, we were doing 27 boxes each, and everyone was going crazy. Instead of all of us getting together and telling the supervisor 'look we can't keep on', we just kept working. One woman was so upset she was crying. Some people were actually cutting their fingers." Boredom was another thing which bothered Cathy. "The work," she said, "required a certain amount of concentration, but not enough to keep your mind occupied. Talking to the next worker could upset the assembly line. You're

working all day long with someone and sometimes you don't even know her name."

The factory had a union but Cathy felt it had done "nothing for the women". Jobs were designated "male" and "female" with the lowest-paid man earning more than the highest-paid woman. So there was no place to turn, but to quit.

Over the past eight years in Canada the position of working women, such as Cathy, has come under special scrutiny. It began in 1967 when the Royal Commission on the Status of Women listened to women across the country cry out for equal pay, more employment opportunities, fairer treatment by unions, maternity leave from work and day care centres for their children. For the first time, factory workers, clerks, secretaries, professionals and housewives were provided with an official forum to discuss the problems they faced in society.

The Royal Commission hearings coincided with angry demands for equality from the women's liberation movement. Unlike the Commission, the movement did not attract a representative cross-section of Canadian society. Rather, it received its greatest support from university-educated, middle-class women. Compared to the Commission's sessions, the tone of the movement was strident and radical. Many people criticized the movement for being extremist and seeking confrontation. Yet, it forced the community to re-examine the position of women as marriage partners, child rearers, and wage earners. As such it complemented the efforts of the Royal Commission.

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women reported its recommendations in 1970. A federal Advi-

sory Council on the Status of Women was set up to advise on the implementation of the recommendations. In addition, various status of women councils were formed in Ontario, Québec, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island. Some legislation requiring equal pay and maternity leave was passed in some provinces. On the federal level a new Unemployment Insurance program introduced maternity benefits. The Canada Pension Plan was amended to provide men and women with the same benefits. More government-subsidized day-care nurseries were opened. Centres to help divorcées and single parents find work were set up. Consciousness-raising groups, particularly among educated women, proliferated in the cities and suburbs. Attitudes toward women in non-traditional roles began to soften among the middle classes. More and more men began to accept the concept that women deserved equal pay and equal opportunities, and that their positions in society need not necessarily be confined to home and hearth.

By the beginning of 1975, proclaimed by the United Nations as International Women's Year, many Canadians were under the impression that the position of working women had significantly improved. As an example of women's rise to power and prominence with men, the media pointed to Sylvia Ostry, the first woman deputy minister in the federal government; Pauline Jewett, Simon Fraser University president; Dr. Bette Stephenson, Canadian Medical Association president; Ontario's Pauline McGibbon, Canada's first woman Lieutenant-Governor; and Grace Hartman, Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Canada's second largest union. Progress was cited when the CBC televised women reporters on the national eleven o'clock news, and

Bell Canada appointed a woman to its board of directors.

Unfortunately, publicity about the advancement of a few extraordinary women in government, business and the professions does not give a true picture of the position of average working women. Although an increased percentage of working-age women are in the labour force — 40 per cent in 1971, more than half of whom are married, compared with 30 per cent in 1961 — their numbers are not equally distributed with men in the better-paid sectors of the economy. In fact, the percentages of women in these job sectors has actually declined in the last ten years.

The only statistical evidence of improvement in women's status in the labour market is in managerial positions and this is marginal. In other sectors, women have not improved at all. For example, in the professional and technical sector, where the pay is relatively good, the percentage of women dropped from 42 per cent in 1961 to 41 per cent in 1971. It also dropped in the craftsman and operators sector — from 15 per cent to 14 per cent in the same decade. On the other hand, in the clerical, sales and service sectors, where pay is lowest, the percentages of women have been rising — from 62 per cent to 72 per cent of clerks, 36 per cent to 39 per cent of sales people and 58 per cent to 60 per cent of service workers in the 1961 to 1971 period.

A great deal of publicity has been given to token women truck drivers, welders, plumbers and mechanics, not to mention ordained ministers, chartered accountants, and engineers who have broken out of traditional female occupations. However, this should not obscure the fact that two-thirds of all working

women are confined to job “ghettos” at the lowest levels of the clerk, sales, service, and manufacturing sectors. Working women are predominantly cashiers, clerks, sales help, stenographers, secretaries, waitresses, cleaners, seamstresses, maids and housekeepers. They are women such as Cathy who are often forced to work up to 13 hours a day at minimum wage. As such they are the contemporary “cheap labour” doing “women’s jobs” in the disadvantaged sectors of the economy now abandoned by men.

In these sectors salaries, working conditions, and fringe benefits are below par. Sylva Gelber, Director of the federal Labour Department’s Women’s Bureau, points out that as more women enter certain industries, salary levels go down in relation to other sectors. This is because employers by and large still feel women deserve less pay than men. Even within female-dominated industries, there are vast differences between the salaries of men and women. In 1971, for example, male clerks received an average of \$7,226 annually, compared with \$4,610 for females. In the service sector the gap was even wider — \$6,379 for men, compared with \$3,000 for women.

Critics, such as Sylva Gelber, have charged that unions are doing very little to improve the situation. They avoid organizing weak female-dominated industries on the grounds that low wages for women are justified. Even where agreements cover women, they often flout equal-pay legislation and sign contracts where women receive less pay for equivalent work.

Sex stereotyping by occupation, and low salaries continue, despite the fact that women workers on the average are better educated than men. Their median

years of schooling in 1971 was 10.4 compared to the men’s 9.7. They are also better trained. A Labour department survey reveals that 28 per cent of women workers compared with only 21 per cent of men, receive vocational and technical training.

There are complex reasons for the continuation of women’s low status in the labour market. One of the reasons can be found in the nature of vocational counselling which still stresses a limited range of occupations for women. Only in the past few years has there been any attempt to encourage women to consider medicine, engineering, or administration — fields traditionally labelled “masculine”.

It has not helped that women have been socialized to accept inferior salaries and conditions. Having been trained from birth not to be demanding or ambitious, they are constantly uneasy about offending or alienating men — whether it be husband or boss. As sociologist David Reisman has commented, ceilings are placed on the ambition of women by their own anticipation of what men will tolerate.

In addition to deeply engrained attitudes about female roles, not only among men but among women themselves, there are many practical reasons why women find it hard to advance. The household is still primarily run by women. They are responsible for buying and preparing food, doing the laundry, and keeping the house clean and in order. More importantly, they are the ones who must find babysitters and day-care centres. As workers and householders they carry a double burden compared to their husbands. When they get pregnant, they are not guaranteed maternity leave, except in a few provinces. They lose pay and may

collect only a percentage of their wages under Unemployment Insurance for the time off.

The women's liberation movement and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women sensitized the general population to the idea of women's rights and to the notion of female equality with men. Despite publicity on the issues, however, there have been no basic structural changes in women's status in Canadian society. New human rights commissions, status of women councils, and high-paid civil service posts to promote women have accomplished only marginal reform. They have not helped Cathy out of the Nova Scotia chocolate factory. The facts speak for themselves. Over the past seven years women's overall status in the labour market has not improved; it has deteriorated.

This may come as a surprise to many people — especially the middle class which has seen some improvements in the status of the more well-to-do educated women. Unfortunately government and the press tend to judge women's status by looking only at this group. This is very unfortunate as the middle- and upper-class women in our society are perhaps the most privileged group of all. Most are married. As such they have the choice to work or not to work. Many choose to do so for "personal fulfillment" and can well afford non-subsidized day care or full-time housekeepers.

The working-class woman is in a totally different position. Studies show she works not because she wants to get out of the house but because of economic necessity. She does not have the same choices as the middle-class woman. She cannot hire domestic help with the same financial ease. For her, good subsidized day care is vital.

She feels that both the federal and provincial authorities have done very little to help her. Because the majority of working women are weak and silent compared to middle-class women, their needs are more easily ignored. Laws and programs covering child care, equal pay enforcement, anti-discrimination in employment practices, and job promotion need to be carefully revamped to solve her specific problems. Yet there is so little concern for the working-class woman that almost no research has been done on her conditions of employment. We now turn to a more detailed look at the lot of the majority of working women who are found primarily in the clerical, sales, service and manufacturing sectors. From there we will examine unions, legislation covering equal pay, opportunity programs, maternity leave, and day care. Finally we shall conclude with an assessment of possible trends in the future.

WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET

CLERICAL SECTOR

Joan is a married woman of forty with clerical and secretarial skills who went back to work when her children were grown. She started off as an Office Overload typist, but eventually worked her way up to executive secretary at \$8,000 a year. In addition to secretarial duties, Joan also became a clerk supervisor, head of the Telex room, and chief of supplies. Her boss asked her to do some accounting as well. She discovered that a twenty-one-year-old male assistant clerk with far less responsibility was making \$20 more per week than she was. When she complained, her boss said the young man deserved more because he was taking accounting courses at night, whereas her "secretarial duties were light and did not deserve more

pay." "He refused," she said, "to acknowledge all the other duties I had taken on without being given either the title or the remuneration." She quit the job, but has had similar experiences in subsequent positions and is becoming discouraged. "I'm not interested in being a typist who files her nails all day long. I don't want to jump up every time the boss wants coffee. I'm prepared to take responsibilities...to work hard...but I want to be paid for what I do."

Like Joan, one-third of all women in the work force are clerical workers. This is becoming more and more a women's preserve. In 1961, 62 per cent of clerical workers were women. Now it is 72 per cent. Women clerks are on the average better educated than their male counterparts. Yet their salaries are lower and advancement into top clerical or management levels is difficult.

Some figures on the education of male and female clerks and managers illustrate the point. In 1971, 45 per cent of women clerks had completed high school, compared with only 14 per cent of men. On the other hand, 18 per cent of men with high school, but only three per cent of women with high school held managerial jobs. University of British Columbia sociologist Patricia Marchak points out in "The Girls at the Office," that a higher proportion of men with only elementary schooling than of women with university degrees held managerial positions.

Equal pay for equal work may exist on the statute books, but it does not exist in the clerical sector. *Facts and Figures*, an annual compendium of labour statistics on women published by the Women's Bureau, Canada Department of Labour, looked at ten clerical

jobs in four cities in 1972, and found that the average weekly rates of women were less than those of men for similarly described work. For example, 1972 figures show that in Halifax, a female "junior accounting clerk" earned \$88 a week, compared to the male's \$100. In Montreal, a female "intermediate clerk" received \$110, compared to \$125 for a male. In Toronto a female "material record clerk" made \$101, compared to a male's \$138; and in Vancouver, a female "tabulating machine operator" earned only \$126, compared to \$140 for a male.

Poor chances for advancement may be illustrated by the examples of the federal Public Service, the country's largest employer, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), a major crown corporation. In the federal government, women comprise more than half of the people in the clerical and regulatory category. Yet men succeed in getting the highest positions. Only 30 per cent of women are above the "CR 4 level" compared to 60 per cent of men. An Equal Opportunities for Women Office under the Public Service Commission was established four years ago to help capable women advance. However, so far, its efforts have been modest.*

Nicole Levac of the Public Service Alliance, the union covering most federal employees, feels the Commission's programs for women do "very little." Women are "not being promoted... it is hard for them to move up the ladder. There are more encouragements for men."

*Details follow under section on legislation and programs.

The CBC appears to be no better than the federal public service. At this writing, a special CBC task force chaired by Catherine MacIver, examined the status of women in the Corporation. A study was done of CBC employees with 29 or more years of service, who began as clerks, stenographers, secretaries or office boys. Average starting salary for women was slightly higher than for men because the women were better educated. Now the men have surpassed the women both in job level and salary. The women make an average of \$13,000 to \$14,000 annually, whereas the men make \$19,000 to \$20,000. Women at the CBC, says Ms. MacIver, are not being groomed to move up the ladder. Many secretaries and clerks, she points out, feel stuck in dead-end jobs. They want to do more interesting and responsible work, but feel they are not given the chance.

Advancement in the private sector is equally difficult. The federal Manpower Department for the past year has been insisting that registered job openings be open equally to men and women. Louise Hardy, Montreal Co-ordinator of Manpower programs and until recently, the Québec division's women's employment co-ordinator, says it is impossible to enforce this policy. Discovering and correcting discrimination is difficult either because many women are too embarrassed to complain about it, or because it is too subtle and covert to prove.

Ms. Hardy has observed that women are readily hired into low-paying clerical jobs, where the majority of workers are female. However, when they apply for more responsible, well-paying positions, they are often turned down even when highly qualified. At present, women are being trained in Manpower courses for

better-paying jobs in finance and commerce. However, Ms. Hardy says that firms with such vacancies are refusing to accept the women. "It is difficult for women to break through above the clerical and stenographic levels." She notes that Manpower will take action if the woman wishes to pursue the matter, but often the woman involved prefers not to.

Olga's experience typifies the problems faced by women clerks eager to advance. Olga was a secretary-clerk with a BA degree who worked for the export manager of a large firm and earned \$7,280 a year. Because she wanted responsibility, she gradually took on more and more of her boss' work. In gratitude he gave her a \$520 yearly raise, bringing her salary up to \$7,800. (It should be noted that a man in the same department doing equivalent work, but with less education made \$11,000.) After a while, when Olga's boss left the company, she felt quite capable of taking on his job since she knew all about it. However, the company did not consider her, and instead hired an outsider to replace her boss. Olga regarded this as an insult and resigned. "My superiors couldn't understand why I was leaving," she said. "They thought my salary and my job were enough for a woman. It had never occurred to them that I was being unfairly treated." Ironically, her new boss did not last very long after she left. He was soon fired for incompetence! Olga has not given up. She is now working on a Master's of Business Administration degree, which she hopes will prove that she is as competent to handle an executive position as any man.

Some women are not as optimistic as Olga. A number are leaving offices for better-paying unionized factories, even though factory work carries less status than office work. However, many women don't care. Apparently

they would rather exchange status for money. Take the case of Dora, a stock-room supplier in a Winnipeg bus factory. Dora used to work as a clerk in the security office of a large department store. "I had very responsible and enjoyable work," she said, "but the pay was terrible," only \$2.20 an hour. Dora found her expenses too high — \$100 a month for child care for two preschoolers plus "clothes for work. When you're working in an office, you need a decent wardrobe, and that can run into money," she explained.

A year and a half ago Dora decided to try factory work because she had heard from friends that certain factory jobs sometimes pay more. She said she realized there would be "less status" in it, but she didn't care. "I'm making about double what I got at the department store, and I have no clothes expenses, because at the factory I can wear jeans." Dora, 26, was recently separated from her husband and says a well-paying job is now indispensable. She added that if she wasn't making at least \$4.00 an hour, she would probably "have to go on welfare. I could never make it on a small clerical salary."

Some women prefer a different route to more money and greater responsibility. Joy, who started off as a clerk with Pacific Press in Vancouver and is now a printer "journeyman" feels women get a much better deal in the trades. Five years ago Joy was making \$60 a week as a clerk. After she divorced and realized she needed more money to support herself and her daughter, she decided to apply for an apprenticeship. Today, after a four-year apprenticeship, she earns \$338 a week. Joy says she was the first woman apprentice at Pacific Press and the company wasn't "overly enchanted". However, the union supported her candidacy after it

was shown in pre-testing that she had an aptitude for the work. Joy is now an active member of the International Typographical Union, and is chairperson of the Committee on Women's Rights in the B.C. Federation of Labour. She encourages women to become more active in unions and to go into the better-paying trades. Joy feels women are getting better treatment from the unions in B.C. than in other provinces. However, she says "there is still some resistance from both unions and companies. Men will accept us in the trades, but we still have to prove ourselves."

SERVICE AND SALES SECTOR

The service and sales sector is another occupational area where a large number of women are found. It accounts for 30 per cent of all employed women. Of the total female labour force of over 3 million, 22 per cent are in services and eight per cent are in sales. Like the clerical sector, this area has expanded and drawn upon the increasing numbers of women joining the labour force over the past ten years. The proportion of women in many service industries has been steadily rising. In banks, public utilities, hospitals, hotels, and restaurants, women now make up 60 per cent of all workers compared to only 56 per cent ten years ago. Despite the fact that the sector is predominantly female, men employed there receive better wages. In 1971, for example, women working full-time in services received an average of \$3,000 per year compared to \$6,379 for men. Because of the large numbers of female workers, the industry finds it easy to set generally low wages and maintain poor working conditions. In most cases, it is poorly educated immigrant women unaware of minimum wage legislation who suffer most. Hotel and restaurant work, in fact, has become so undesirable to Canadians that increasingly only immigrants and foreign

workers on work permits will put up with its low pay and poor conditions.

Take the case of Katie, a young Italian woman who came to Montreal four years ago as a landed immigrant. "I've always worked as a waitress," explained Katie who has only sixth-grade education and speaks limited English. Her first job was in an Italian restaurant where she received no wage at all — only tips — and was required to work twelve hours a day, six days a week, with no paid holidays. Katie did not know these requirements were illegal. She was not aware that waitresses must receive a basic hourly wage of \$2.00 an hour plus tips;* nor was she aware that if she worked more than 45 hours a week she was entitled to time-and-a-half rates. She did not know that every employer must grant two weeks of paid holidays a year. "I didn't mind working for nothing," she said, "because the tips were okay."

Later, however, she got another job where the tips were not so good. "They paid me \$40 for a 72-hour week." This averages out to 60 cents an hour, which is one-third of the mandatory minimum wage. Katie's tips brought her weekly salary up to \$100. Yet earning only the minimum wage, she should have made \$171. "I had to quit when they cut out my salary altogether and expected me to live on tips only." Katie said she "didn't dare" go to the Minimum Wage Commission while still on the job. "I would have been fired... or they would have made my life completely miserable," she said. Now, however, she is claiming her back pay at the Minimum Wage Commission.

*Regular minimum wage in Québec at this writing is \$2.30 per hour. It goes up to \$2.60 June 1, 1975. By law, waitresses may receive less because they may earn tips.

After four years in Canada, Katie is now for the first time working under completely legal working conditions: an eight hour day, six days a week at \$2.00 an hour plus tips, with two weeks of paid holidays a year. However, like most restaurant and hotel workers, she doesn't get the eight legal paid holidays, such as Christmas, New Year's, Good Friday and Thanksgiving, which even low-paid office clerks take for granted. In addition, there are no fringe benefits. There is no sick leave, for example. If Katie is off sick she automatically loses pay. What's more, there is no insurance scheme or company pension.

Marie, a Greek immigrant who worked as a cleaning woman in a small factory also had problems getting proper payment from her employer. She worked for a year and a half at minimum wage, but did not receive her mandatory holiday pay. At one point she was off sick for three days. When she returned, her boss told her she had been sick "too long" and that he had hired someone else. "You're fired," he said. However, the papers he gave her for purposes of Unemployment Insurance indicated she had "quit". This meant she would have to wait five weeks before she could collect Unemployment Insurance. If her form had been correctly labelled as "fired", she could have collected after two weeks.

When she left, the company owed her two weeks' back pay. The last two pay cheques she was given bounced at the bank. Marie who could not speak English was completely confused. She went to a Greek association which helps workers with labour problems. The association called the employer and told him she would seek redress at the Minimum Wage Commission for non-payment of wages if the company didn't issue

new cheques. The manager, however, boasted that he was “not scared” that easily. Perhaps he was right, because the claim is still being processed and Marie has not seen a cent after months of litigation.

If these women belonged to a union, they might have avoided such problems and humiliations. However, only a small percentage of the service industry is unionized, and even where it is, women do not get equal pay with men. Unions, says Sylva Gelber, do not want to openly discriminate against women. However, they get around equal-pay laws by classifying women differently. A top Québec Manpower official said that, in Québec, unions affiliated with the Québec Federation of Labour (QFL) or the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU) still sign collective agreements with different clauses for men and women. The official pointed out that in a recent agreement signed for cleaners in hospitals, different classifications were listed for the same job. The first class which commanded higher pay, required wider brooms and was assigned to men. The second class with less pay and smaller brooms was given to women. Fortunately, this sort of practice is diminishing under pressure from women and government. In contracts signed by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), perhaps the most progressive union in Canada as far as treatment of women is concerned, all hospital workers get equal pay for equal work. However, this came about only after women shouted “loud and clear for it,” says CUPE Secretary-Treasurer Grace Hartman.

The sales sector is not as important as service or clerical in that it accounts for only eight per cent of the female labour force. However, its percentage of women is rising. In 1961, 30 per cent of sales people were

women. Today, it is 40 percent. Once again women are concentrated in the lowest-paid jobs. Many work part-time, and therefore, receive no fringe benefits. *Facts and Figures* lists different average hourly earnings of full-time men and women workers in small retail industries for 1970. Larger retail stores pay somewhat better. In department stores, men average \$3.07 an hour; and women, \$2.15.

TYPE OF RETAILER	AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS, 1970	
	MEN	WOMEN
Small department	\$2.32	\$1.60
Apparel and shoe	\$2.63	\$1.72
Women's ready-to-wear	\$2.71	\$1.80
Household furniture and appliance	\$2.66	\$1.89
Florist	\$2.77	\$1.81

Data: *Facts and Figures*, 1973, Women's Bureau, Canada Department of Labour.

Barbara, an assistant buyer in a Toronto department store, says women are promoted from sales clerks to management, “if they show aptitude and ambition,” but there is no such thing as equal pay for equal work. Men get more money than women for the same jobs even where qualifications and experience are the same. Advancement up the hierarchy is also easier for men, she says. Women in the store, however, are nervous about raising the question of discrimination. “I could lose my job,” said Barbara. “When we’re hired, we are expressly forbidden to even discuss our salary with

other store personnel let alone outsiders — I had to sign a paper to that effect!”

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Fifteen per cent of working women are found in the manufacturing sector. Not surprisingly, they are clustered in low-paying industries with poor conditions where the tedious work they do carries little status or responsibility. The top female-employing manufacturer is the clothing industry which is 78 per cent women, followed by knits at 68 per cent and leather industries at 54 per cent. Like the hotel and restaurant industry, these industries offer low pay, long working hours, poor working conditions and few fringe benefits. For that reason they tend to attract mainly women and immigrants. Hourly wages of women are uniformly lower than those of men for similarly described jobs.

Facts and Figures notes the following:

	WOMEN	MEN
Sewing Machine Operator	\$2.11	\$3.11
Hosiery Cutter	2.07	2.76
Textile Spinner	2.45	3.41
Leather Tanneries, finisher	2.79	2.84
Fur Operator	3.41	4.00
Fish packer	1.60	1.73

To take an example, in Montreal at a non-unionized hosiery firm, Olympia works ten hours a day sorting stockings. She works by the piece — getting three cents per dozen. Although she works at breakneck speed, she averages only \$1.50 an hour — far below the minimum wage of \$2.30 an hour. She takes ten minutes for lunch, gets only two paid legal holidays

(Christmas and New Year's) annually, and receives no fringe benefits. Actual working conditions are reminiscent of the 19th century. Workers labour in a dark basement with no windows. Sorting “desks” are actually discarded cardboard boxes. There are no chairs. The place is filthy. It is so littered with junk, it is a fire hazard. Among the garbage surrounding the sorters’ cardboard “desks” are partially filled oil drums, greasy rags, old newspapers, empty tin cans and broken machines. Olympia, a Portuguese woman who speaks little English, is not aware of minimum wage legislation. However, another worker in the factory quit and complained to the Minimum Wage Commission. The agency investigated and ordered the firm to reimburse the workers six months’ back pay. However, many months later the company was still refusing to pay anything.

At a Montreal dress and shirt firm, conditions are considerably better. Sewing machine operators and pressers are covered by a union agreement and as such are guaranteed more than the minimum wage. There is a lunch room and clean working conditions. However, non-unionized personnel, namely shippers and finishers do not fare so well. They receive the basic minimum wage only. Their hours are from 8 to 6, compared with the operators’ 8 to 4. Overtime twice a week or Saturday morning is mandatory during peak season. As a result many workers who do not want to come in Saturday have to work 12 hours two days a week. Although the eight legal holidays and a two-week annual vacation are paid, there is no wage security. “When there is extra work to do, we have to work all the time,” said a finisher. “But during the slack seasons, if there is no work, we are sent home without pay.”

In the knit industry, which is even less unionized, employers have been known to take advantage of women whenever they can. Workers are often fired when they are off sick. Some do not pay vacations. Others pay below the required minimum wage. Twelve-hour days are common and fringe benefits unknown. Angela, a fast-working South American woman employed at a knit factory, averages \$3.15 an hour on piece work, which is above the minimum wage and considered good. Unlike some factories, she gets the eight paid legal holidays as well. However, she does not get full vacation pay. Under the Québec minimum wage legislation, workers are entitled to two full weeks' paid holidays annually. Angela, who has worked two years, admitted she did get "one week with pay" for which she felt "grateful". What she was not aware of, was that over a two-year period, the company had welched on three full weeks of holidays. "No one told us we get holidays," she said. "We didn't know."

Angela is now pregnant, and hopes to continue working after the baby is born. However, she says there is no guarantee she will be rehired. "Other girls don't get their jobs back," she remembered. There is no maternity leave legislation in Québec and the factory does not volunteer the benefit.

In addition to poor pay, long hours and no fringe benefits, most factory jobs combine high pressure and deadening boredom. This is because they involve repetitive work on a piece-work basis. To make more than the minimum wage, the workers have to operate at break-neck speed. Even this, however, is self-defeating because many factories cut the piece rates as the women work faster so that wages constantly

hover around the minimum wage rate. These unhealthy working conditions have been known to cause many physical and mental breakdowns. Many women cannot take the pace for very long so they leave periodically to recuperate before necessity forces them back to work.

Hanna, 49, works in a Winnipeg mattress factory where she assembles springs.

She had this to say. "I've really got to struggle to make money at the factory. I work like hell, 8 to 4:30, with only a half hour for lunch, and make about \$20 a day. I could make more if I was willing to do overtime but I couldn't stand more than eight hours. I feel like a caged animal in there". Hanna complains of "exhaustion" at the end of the day because she's always on her feet. "We have to keep walking around the tables where the coils are." Her hands are also "very sore" because "we work with steel, and after a while it hurts."

Hanna says women in the factory, which is covered by the United Steelworkers of America Union, are confined to "women's jobs" only and assemble "certain types of springs." The men do other spring assembly work which she admits requires "more lifting." Piece-work rates for "men's jobs" are "higher" but she claims "women's jobs are just as difficult" and should be paid at the same rates.

Hanna has been in the mattress factory for ten years and stays on because she doesn't know where else to go. She says Manitoba factories don't pay workers much, especially the women. "It doesn't matter where you go... you can kill yourself over sewing machines in the garment factories, too." Hanna feels the piece-

work system "isn't fair" especially as workers get older. "It's okay when you're young and you can go like mad... but when you get older, it's harder... and you can't make as much."

Margaret, a mother of five, works for a Winnipeg food-processing factory where she also finds it "hard-going". She gets \$3.15 an hour on an assembly line "pulling the right thigh off turkeys." Most of the workers are women. Margaret says she too is "absolutely exhausted" at the end of the day because she's on her feet "eight hours straight." Chairs "could be placed" along the assembly line and around tables where chickens and turkeys are cleaned. However, Margaret says chairs would increase the workload of floor cleaners so they weren't installed.

Men at the factory are paid a dollar more an hour than the women. They are "segregated from the women and do different jobs," she said, "but I don't see why they should get a dollar more." Last year, the union asked the company to raise women's wages to equal those of the men, but the company said they "couldn't afford it" and the "union didn't insist. We feel badly because at another food company here, the women are getting the same as the men."

Even though Margaret finds her job tiring and tedious, she says it is "better than the garment trade." She used to be a sewing machine operator in a dress factory, but there was "so much dust, my nose was always bleeding, so I had to leave."

HOME WORKERS

Perhaps one of the most exploited groups of women in the labour force are the home workers. This group

comprises a small part of the total labour force: in 1972, it numbered 2,760, of whom 90 per cent were women. Home workers are concentrated in clothing, textile, leather, printing, and knitting mill industries. They are neither covered by unions, nor by minimum wage legislation. The Royal Commission on the Status of Women reported that "when used as a cheap source of labour, home work can undermine occupational standards within an industry and exploit those home workers who have no collective means of demanding appropriate wages and adequate terms and conditions of employment." As a source of income, home work has both advantages and disadvantages. "On the one hand," said the Royal Commission Report, "it is convenient for women tied to her home by family responsibilities. On the other hand, there are inherent dangers of exploitation." Since so little information exists on the home workers the Commission suggested that the federal Labour department do a survey of them. It has yet to be done.

An interview with one Montreal home worker whose job consists of inserting cords in plastic bags revealed unbelievable conditions. "Every morning a man from the plastics company drops off about 1,500 bags for me to cord," said Yvette, a French-Canadian woman of about fifty. "It takes me fifteen hours a day to do the lot. I start at seven in the morning and work till twelve. Then I make lunch for my 12-year-old daughter, when she comes from school, and for my husband, who is on Unemployment Insurance. At two, I start working again until five. Then I go from seven at night to two in the morning."

For her 15-hour working day, Yvette nets less than five dollars, or up to 30 cents an hour. "I know, you

can't live on it. But I want to make some money and my husband doesn't let me leave the house. He wants me to be home during the day." But there's another reason, she admitted, when I pointed out that she would make more money working part-time at night as a cleaner. "My husband is jealous. He doesn't want me out of the house working in a factory or even as a domestic."

DOMESTIC WORKERS

Domestics are another exploited group. These workers, practically all of whom are women, do not belong to any union and are not covered by basic labour legislation. Most domestic workers do not register with agencies. Their pay and conditions, therefore, often depend largely on the goodwill of the employer. Those domestics who are paid by agencies are covered by Unemployment Insurance and the Canada Pension Plan. Employers with full-time employees are also required under the law to make the proper contributions and deductions. However, the law is in practical terms unenforceable.

As the federal Women's Bureau has pointed out, "domestic service, for the most part, remains outside the controls established by legislation for standards of employment." The problems of administering employment standards in private homes, they say, "are almost insurmountable in a society that prizes freedom of the individual." Some employees, too, prefer the present system because they do not have to pay income tax. Fringe benefits—legal holidays, insurance, private pension, do not, of course, exist for such workers. Pay, hours and working conditions are arbitrary. It is not uncommon for live-in maids to earn as little as \$30 a week. Many are expected to begin their day by making

breakfast and finish when the dinner dishes are done. On top of this 12-hour day, they may have to babysit at night and, of course, there is no overtime. Only one full day off a week is the rule. Anything else is up to the employer.

Women who clean houses by the day get a better deal. Rates vary between \$10 and \$25 for a five- to eight-hour day. Such workers can therefore make more than the minimum wage. However, they are not covered by Unemployment Insurance, because they are considered "self-employed." Most do not declare income nor pay taxes so are not covered by the Canada Pension Plan either.

PART-TIME WORKERS

A discussion of the non-professional working woman cannot omit the part-time worker. In Canada, more women work part-time than men. Only six per cent of men in the labour force work part-time compared with 25 per cent of women; the majority of them, married. Studies show that the major reason women give for part-time work is keeping house, followed by going to school. Among men, the major reason for part-time work is going to school, followed by unemployment. Studies also indicate that most part-time work is done in the wealthier regions. In Ontario, 28 per cent of women work part-time; in British Columbia, 32 per cent; and on the Prairies, 34 per cent; whereas the Atlantic provinces and Québec, which are poorer, have fewer part-time women workers, with only 18 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. D. Wakid, in an Economic Council study of women in the labour force explains it this way: "Where income levels are generally high and economic conditions as good as in Ontario, women are under less pressure to be full-time

workers than those residing in slow growth areas as in the Atlantic provinces." All but a very few women, it has been established, work for economic reasons. Where incomes are high, men's earnings and some part-time work by wives suffice to support the family. Where incomes are low, the women feel the need to work full-time.

Industries with the highest levels of part-time workers are sales and service where 30 per cent of all women work. In both groups a higher percentage of women than men are part-time workers. The problem with part-time work is that it usually pays less than full-time work and offers no fringe benefits. Very often, companies deliberately hire part-time workers simply to save money on wages and fringe benefits. Sylva Gelber says "this is one way employers get around paying women as much as men." She explained that a person is considered "part-time" even if she works 90 per cent of "full-time." Yet there is no holiday pay or other benefits.

To take a specific example, Thérèse is a part-time cashier at a Québec supermarket chain. She earns \$3.27 an hour, below the rate of full-time cashiers, and also lower than the rate of male wrappers who do a less responsible job than the cashiers. Thérèse usually works less than the forty-hour "full-time" load. However, when she works more than forty hours she still gets the part-time rate, because that is her classification. Most of the cashiers in the store, practically all of them women, are classified as part-time workers. Thérèse notes that in her store, "only two out of nine cashiers are full-time." The union has demanded that 50 per cent of all store employees be full-time. However, the classifications dominated by men get priority in all cases.

UNIONS

Unions cover one-third of the Canadian labour force. However, only 22 per cent of women are organized compared to 40 per cent of men. Since unionization usually means higher wages and more fringe benefits, women are at a distinct disadvantage. So far women have not significantly penetrated the better-paying unionized trades which are dominated by men. In the low-wage sales, service and clerical female employment "ghettos," employers often pay only what they can get away with. Many offer only those benefits required under their provincial labour law.

Why have the unions failed to organize the low-paying jobs where most women are found? Some blame the non-progressive attitudes of the union movement. Sylva Gelber, director of the federal Women's Bureau; Dr. Katie Cooke, chairperson of the federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women; Louise Hardy, Montreal Co-ordinator of federal Manpower department programs; and Caroline Pestieau, vice-president of the Québec Status of Women Council, all believe the unions are simply not committed to putting women on an equal footing with men.

Renée Geoffroy and Paule Sainte-Marie, in a study on the attitude of union workers to women in industry, believe that most men still cling to traditional views about female roles in society and cannot accept women as equals in the labour market. Accordingly, men find it normal that women be confined to non-unionized low-paying jobs.

"When the women workers can be concentrated in, and restricted to, jobs which the men do not want to do, they are not regarded as rivals or competitors. Male

unionists think it natural that these jobs be remunerated at rates which men would not accept, because they are the family bread winners," they reported.

Some commentators say that unions cannot be blamed for not organizing women. They claim that women are not easy to organize because either they "identify with management," or are essentially "temporary members of the labour force." Yet Patricia Marchak, who has studied this area, does not agree. A British Columbia worker survey in 1969 showed that non-unionized women were more in favour of unions than men. In addition, it revealed that twice as many women were willing to hold union offices than had been elected. Marchak, therefore, blames closed minds within the unions for the lack of women members.

Another reason why women in the low-paying sectors are not organized is because some provincial legislation makes unionization of certain sectors difficult. In Québec, for example, organizing a small shop is often a long and tortuous process. Employers regularly use intimidation, firings and lengthy labour court proceedings to defeat any attempt to unionize. What took place at a Montreal hosiery factory composed mainly of immigrant women shows that can happen. The majority of workers signed union cards in March 1972; by mid-April, thirty-six of these workers were fired for no apparent reason. A complaint was filed with the labour board which ordered the rehiring of the workers and payment of their back wages. Two years later, however, the women had still not received a cent. Certification was stalled for a year because the employer contested the composition of the bargaining unit. Negotiations finally began in June 1973. By November it was

clear that conciliation was required. At that time, however, the company gave notice that it was going out of business and gradually closed down within a couple of months. According to one woman who was involved in the dispute, "workers who had not joined the union got jobs in other hosiery factories on management recommendations." On the other hand, union supporters were black-listed by the trade and could not work anywhere. Thus they were forced to collect Unemployment Insurance or change trades altogether.

Such experiences are not uncommon. Women who try to unionize small shops are fired as an example to others. Labour Boards can order the employee reinstated if it is determined she has in fact been fired for union activities. However, there is virtually no penalty to an employer who does not heed the order. The most an employer can lose is a \$100 fine, and that only if the worker continues to complain. After one failure to form a union it is understandable that workers are loathe to try a second time.

Lack of sympathy for female equality, however, goes beyond a reluctance to unionize women. Women are not treated as equals within unions. Caroline Pestieau says that the QFL and the CNTU have issued proclamations about equality; yet, one quarter of all collective agreements in Québec have discriminatory clauses. In manufacturing it reaches over 40 per cent. Sylva Gelber adds that the unions do not want to appear discriminatory. They, therefore, carefully hide discriminatory clauses, so when there are different pay scales for men and women, the jobs are classified as A and B rather than male and female. In these cases, to find out whether men and women were paid equally would require a full-scale investigation.

Certain unions claim they are "highly sensitive" to women and are campaigning to ensure their equal treatment. The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is the second largest union in Canada with 200,000 members, 44 per cent of them female. It covers municipal and provincial employees, most of them non-professional workers. Grace Hartman, Secretary-treasurer of the union, said CUPE was the first union to accept the Royal Commission on the Status of Women recommendations and to issue a booklet on women's rights. "In collective agreements," she said, "there are no longer separate articles pertaining to male and female employees. Discrimination in fringe benefits is being gradually eliminated."

Ms. Hartman recognizes that where women are segregated into certain sectors, their wages can be depressed. Therefore, equal pay principles would be meaningless. For that reason, the goal in a recent CUPE campaign in Vancouver was to see that the lowest-paid clerical worker received at least the pay of the manual worker.

Of course, if women want equal treatment they must participate in union activities and run for elective office on local and executive councils. Where women are union officers, women workers often get fairer treatment in contracts. In 1967, Marge Storm who works in a plywood plant in interior B.C., became the first woman officer in the International Woodworkers union in Canada. Thanks to her, the union pressed to abolish restricting women to a "sub-department" in the plant. When the first woman bid for a well-paying job (assistant press supervisor), the company called in an inspector from the Labour Relations Board to disqualify the woman under the

Factories Act which restricted women from lifting loads weighing over 35 pounds. "It was ridiculous. We'd been lifting heavier weights on various jobs for years," said Ms. Storm. The case went to arbitration and the woman won.

For the past year, Ms. Storm has stood behind Linda, a 28-year-old woman fired in April 1974 from an all-male department of the plant by a foreman who thought it was "no place for a woman." "It was a pure case of discrimination. The foreman just didn't want her there." Ms. Storm advised Linda to file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission and called in the legislative director of the B.C. Federation of Labour to act as Linda's legal counsel. Linda was reinstated last June with \$1,900 in back pay after the Human Rights Commission found in her favour. But the fight was not over. Two months later, she was fired again. "A new foreman was making her do the work of two men," said Ms. Storm, and "three men she worked with were willing to testify in her favour." A new complaint was filed. This time, the company decided not to fight it. It settled by reinstating Linda, and giving her complete back pay and seniority.

Women like Marge Storm, who are actively campaigning for women's rights in unions, are still few and far between. So far, participation of women in unions has been minimal. Women hold only 12 per cent of all trade union executive positions. This is partly because they are discouraged by both unions and employers from union participation. The men in unions prefer male leadership. According to Canadian Labour Congress executive vice-president Shirley Carr, women union executives can also face more "harassment" than men. In addition, working women often have less time

for union activity because of their household responsibilities.

Women, however, are starting to realize they must be more active. At CUPE, for example, locals with female presidents more than doubled over the past six years, from 12 per cent to 28 per cent. In Vancouver, women's activity and demands snowballed recently to the point where an organizer asked Ms. Hartman, "How do we turn it off?" She replied: "Just try to and I'll fire you."

Symbolic of women's demand for equality was the Dare Food Company strike by women who refused to take less pay than the men. In May 1972 their union negotiated a two-year contract with wage increases totalling fifty-five cents an hour for men and forty-five cents an hour for women. It recommended that the membership accept the offer. However, since 75 per cent of the members were women, the offer was rejected and a strike was called which lasted two years. Eventually a new contract was signed guaranteeing equal pay for equal work for all workers.

LEGISLATION

EQUAL PAY

We have observed that in every industrial sector, women are not getting equal pay for equal work. Even after considering differences in education, experience, and seniority, there is still a gap of at least 20 per cent in the pay scales of men and women that can only be attributed to outright sex discrimination. Sylvia Ostry, using 1961 figures, arrived at this conclusion in her book on *The Female Worker in Canada*. British Columbia economist R.A. Holmes, in a study of male-female

earnings using more up-to-date figures, comes to the conclusion that there is even greater discrimination than estimated by Ostry.

Where are the laws to prevent these wage differentials? Equal pay legislation has been on the statute books in Canada for some twenty years. Under the Canada Labour Code, establishments under federal jurisdiction must provide equal pay for equal work. Every province, except Québec, has legislation prohibiting different wages for similar work. In most provinces, such legislation falls under human rights commissions or employment standards branches in labour departments.

Except on the federal level enforcement usually follows complaints. Independent routine investigations by government officials to verify application of the law are infrequent. Since most women do not want the unpleasantness and publicity which often accompany complaints, differences in pay are seldom exposed and rectified. Even when there are complaints they do not receive much attention. The Nova Scotia Women's Bureau, in a publication called "Women at Work in Nova Scotia" notes that under Nova Scotia equal pay legislation, "not one complaint has been upheld since the act came into effect." Laws where many loopholes exist or laws which are poorly enforced make a mockery of the equal pay legislation.

Effective legislation, however, is only a partial guarantee of fair treatment for women in the work force. There is one major problem, which equal pay laws cannot rectify. Where all the workers in a particular sector are of the same sex, the principle of equal

pay is irrelevant. Among clerks, cashiers, salespeople, clothing production workers, and home workers, the percentage of women is constantly rising. Clerical-sales-service sectors are now being abandoned by men. As a result, pay levels must be supplemented by other types of legislation, such as equal opportunity laws.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LAWS

Sylvia Gelber feels that in addition to properly enforced laws, it is important that women be given a chance to participate equally in all sectors of the labour force. It has been noted that women comprise only 13 per cent of the managers, 41 per cent of professionals or technicians and 14 per cent of craftsmen or operators. These sectors have achieved more wage gains than the clerical, sales, service and clothing sectors where women are typecast. "Equal opportunity is what is important," says Ms. Gelber.

All provinces, except Prince Edward Island, have legislation prohibiting discrimination in hiring on grounds of sex. This is found mainly in provincial human rights codes. Of the existing ones, Québec's 1964 Employment Discrimination Act is probably the most limited. That is why the Québec Status of Women Council has suggested improved legislation to the provincial government which is considering such action at this writing. The British Columbia Human Rights Code, which was strengthened last year, is probably the strongest anti-discrimination legislation in Canada. Kathleen Ruff, director of the Human Rights branch is actively encouraging women to bring complaints forward to her branch and promises to initiate investigations on her own as well if she proves any discrimination. Fines against the guilty company may go as high as \$5,000.

On the federal level, the Canadian Bill of Rights proclaims sexual equality. More specifically, the 1971 Unemployment Insurance Act prohibits Canada Manpower Centres from allowing employers with job offers to discriminate against women. If the women have the skills required they are expected to be given equal opportunities to compete for the jobs with men.

Having such legislation on the statute books establishes principles, but once again, enforcement is often attempted only in blatant cases after official complaints are lodged. It is much more difficult to legislate equal opportunity than equal pay. It is not easy to establish clear discrimination in hiring practices. What is practically impossible to accomplish through legislation is equal opportunity for advancement. Special programs, rather than laws, are needed to end discrimination in hiring and to help women advance within organizations.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

Equal opportunity programs are very much in their infancy. Perhaps the most significant program for the majority of working women is administered by the federal Manpower department. It runs four hundred Canada Manpower Centres throughout the country, which offer the most comprehensive training and placement service for non-professional workers.

In September 1973, a special office, now headed by Lizzie Fraiken, was set up to ensure that women workers using Canada Manpower services get the same access as men to job offers and training courses. Manpower counselling, done mainly by men, had in the past tended to channel women into the traditional low-paying female employment "ghettos". To rid coun-

sellors of this approach, sensitivity classes were launched last year for Manpower staff. Since 1973 Manpower has refused to accept orders for jobs if the employer specifies male or female, and refuses to list jobs by sex. "Positions must be open to both," says Ms. Fraiken, "and we will take up the case of anyone who runs into discrimination."

A range of training courses in a variety of trades needed on the market are offered to people willing to learn a new job. "Counsellors do not always suggest that women enter the non-traditional courses," notes Ms. Fraiken. "But if a woman demands to be put into a welding course, for example, she will be accepted."

There are five regional co-ordinators in the field, reporting to Ms. Fraiken. Louise Hardy at the Montreal office reports that counsellors sometimes try to place women in traditionally male sectors that have shortages. "When a woman comes in for a course, we ask her if she is willing to diversify. If so, we admit her into a trade course." Once she graduates, the problem often is to find an employer willing to give her a chance.

Ms. Hardy told of a woman who successfully completed a trucker's course. A job request came through Manpower and the woman was sent for an interview. The Teamsters union told her, "We would give you the job, but it is too dangerous for a woman. Therefore, you cannot have it." The woman returned to Manpower and complained. The officer told the Teamsters if they insisted on practicing discrimination, Manpower would not handle their future orders. The woman was hired.

Ms. Hardy adds that very often clients do not complain about sex discrimination to Manpower or the

employer. "To avoid a hassle some women trained in a 'male' field will give in and take a 'female' job. I cannot see any great improvement in placing women. We can see improvement by finding a token woman in this or that field, but for the average woman, I see no change. Women are still largely concentrated in the clerical sector and clerical salaries are not keeping pace with those in other sectors."

Although many officials in Ottawa see the federal government leading the provinces in promoting human rights, the Public Service Commission, Canada's largest employer, has so far made only a modest effort to boost the status of women.

In 1971 an Equal Opportunities for Women office was established in Ottawa. The office's main program to help women in the clerical and secretarial sector is the Special Officers Development Program set up in 1972. Its purpose is to give public servants, "especially female public servants who are now employed in support group occupations, the opportunity to receive training that will assist them in seeking, through the normal competitive process, admission to positions in the Administrative or Foreign Service category or any other officer category for which they may be considered." Since its inception, four hundred people, most of them women, have taken the training. To qualify for the course, candidates must be at least at the clerk 4 or stenographer 6 level. Following the program, which includes a three-week formal course and a one-year on-the-job assignment, over 80 per cent of the trainees have advanced to officer positions.

There are over 50,000 women in "support staff" positions of the federal government. Men predominate at

the higher clerical levels. Special advancement opportunities for roughly four hundred women, over three years, is, therefore, only a modest step forward. The Public Service Alliance which is the main union of the federal public service, sees it as "only a token gesture." Nicole Levac, director of public relations for the Alliance, feels training should not be restricted to support staff at the clerk 4 or stenographer 6 levels. "Women below that level are virtually locked into their low-paying jobs."

There are other equal opportunity programs within the Public Service. However, they often attract those women who have already broken out of female job "ghettos". One of them is an administrative training program leading to administrative and foreign service positions. A second is the Career Assignment Program for middle-management personnel in preparation for upper levels. Female participation in this program rose from four per cent in 1972, to 25 per cent now. In 1973, there were only nine women in the "executive" category (16 in 1974) compared to 859 men; in the "scientific and professional" categories, there were 5,185 women compared to 15,670 men; and in administrative and foreign service, there were 5,508 women compared to 30,374 men.

Some provinces have also set up equal opportunity programs, both for the public and for their own civil servants. For example, the Women's Bureau of the Ontario Labour Department is asking fifty companies in various industrial sectors across the province to develop "action plans" ensuring women employees equal opportunity with men. "At the end of this year, we will assess what they've done," said Marnie Clarke, director of the Women's Bureau, "and if they aren't

moving on their own we'll bring in legislation." A plan to encourage women to advance within the Ontario civil service is also underway. Programs include career counselling and consciousness-raising workshops. A number of ministries have on-the-job training programs to help support staff advance into administrative positions, and have appointed special consultants for these programs.

The Women's Employment Bureau of the British Columbia government is doing its best to break women out of low-paying clerical-sales-service jobs and into the better paying unionized trades. "As soon as the economy picks up," says director Chris Waddell, "we're going to get women into training programs leading to higher skills." Ms. Waddell is pressuring companies to hire women in so-called "men's jobs". She says that employers are starting to do so up north where there is high turnover "in order to encourage families to stay." The Aluminum Company of Canada in Kitimat has hired about fifty women this year in a variety of plant jobs normally done by men. "Women are operating overhead cranes, and handling all sorts of heavy equipment, for a basic pay of at least \$5 an hour." Later on, these women will be able to bid for other jobs or apprenticeships. The British Columbia civil service also has a program to help women. Each ministry has a woman looking into career advancement possibilities. An interdepartmental group has been established to ensure that women can compete on an equal basis with men for any job openings.

Promotion of women's rights in Québec is the mandate of the Québec Council on the Status of Women which reports directly to the cabinet. According to Caroline Pestieau, its vice-president, equal op-

portunity for women in the public service is a "high priority." Ms. Pestieau reports that in 1974, 76 per cent of women in the public service, compared to only 28 percent of men, earned less than \$7,000 annually. Ninety per cent of the women are in the clerk category. Promotion and training programs to help female personnel advance are part of a general anti-discrimination program which was presented to Premier Robert Bourassa. The program is supported in principle but has yet to be implemented.

For encouragement of women, kudos must go to the City of Toronto government which for the past year has had a dynamic Task Force on the Status of Women, headed by Judith Adam and her assistant, Carolyn Klopstock. They receive modest salaries (less than \$12,000 a year), compared to the status of women promoters in federal and provincial civil services. Yet they are accomplishing a great deal.

The Task Force has a mandate to examine and recommend programs to the Toronto city council. The first action taken by Ms. Adam was to present a brief in consultation with the city's public health nurses pointing out pay inequalities in that area. Public health nurses, said the brief, earn less money than public health inspectors, although the nurses have more education and responsibility. As a result, the council hired outside consultants to set up a job evaluation program which will result in new wage levels. Another brief examining the jobs and salaries of men and women in the city hall civil service has also been completed. "We found most of the women are low-paid clerks while the men are in management," said Ms. Adam. As a result, a committee chaired by the mayor is now discussing an "affirmative action plan" to pro-

vide women with more opportunities for advancement.

The first goal won by the Task Force outside its operation in the civil service was the inclusion of a day care centre in a proposed low-income housing project. Ms. Adam discovered that working women were upset because child care facilities were not going to be built into some new housing projects for Toronto. She met with the women concerned and collaborated with them on a brief. As a result, the city council agreed to change the plans accordingly.

As part of their service, the Task Force offers information to women on subjects ranging from employment training to marriage counselling. General "information sessions" on a variety of topics are held once a month. Briefs in progress concern training programs for housewives, help to alcoholic women, and a birth-control clinic.

MATERNITY LEAVE

The movement for sexual equality with men in the labour market does not end with equal pay, job offers, and career advancement. If women are to perform as equals, clear provisions for maternity leave and day care are necessary. Since married women constitute more than half the female labour force, the problem of children is of primary importance. Maternity leave benefits are provided only by the federal Unemployment Insurance Act, passed in 1971. Pregnant women are entitled to fifteen weeks of benefits at the regular rates—two-thirds of their salaries, up to a maximum of \$123.00 a week.

No company ensures full salary. The federal Women's Bureau reports that there is "consideration" of this at

the CBC. Some unions are apparently planning to ask for it in new contracts. However, as the Women's Bureau's Lucille Caron points out, "at this point it's all only in the talking stage."

Maternity benefits under Unemployment Insurance, however, do not guarantee a job after pregnancy. Workers under federal jurisdiction are covered by maternity leave provisions in a 1971 amendment to the Canada Labour Code. Seventeen weeks off are allowed. Eight months are allowed to federal public servants. The rest of the workers depend on provincial legislation.

Six provinces—British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario*, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia—guarantee varying lengths of maternity leave. After pregnancy, women can return to the same jobs with no loss of benefits. None of the provinces, however, requires companies to offer completely paid leave.

DAY CARE

Day care for pre-schoolers and after-school programs for older children are as important as maternity provisions. Latest figures available (1973) show there are 1,500,000 children under 14 of working mothers. Roughly 600,000 are under the age of six and there is day care accommodation in the country for only 55,000 of them as of March 1974. Under particular pressure are approximately 60,000 divorced or separated working mothers who are the sole support for their families.

Government funding for day care is minimal, although it has increased significantly since 1971. Cost is shared between federal and provincial authorities through the Canada Assistance Plan which is designed primarily for welfare families. Provinces must take the initiative in funding.

Each province decides upon an income ceiling below which it is prepared to financially help working parents with children in day care. The federal government will then "match" whatever the province gives. Financial aid for day care varies from province to province. In Québec, for example, a family with an income of \$4,500 would pay \$520 a year for two children in day care; whereas in British Columbia it would be free. The gap, however, narrows at higher levels. At \$8,100, a Québec family would pay \$1,560 for one child in day care, whereas a comparable British Columbia family would pay \$1,380. Families with incomes of over \$10,000 have to pay for day care largely out of their own pockets. In some cities it could run as high as \$20 a day for two children.

There has been some improvement over the last three or four years in the number and quality of day care centres in the country, with British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta leading in terms of availability, standards and subsidization levels. Yet, there is still a feeling in Canada that mothers should stay home and care for their children themselves. In a recent survey, 73 per cent felt women with pre-schoolers should not work. Most women, however, work for economic reasons rather than to get away from their children. Studies show that mothers of young children work in order to keep the family above poverty level. The likelihood of a married woman working outside the home

*Applies only to businesses of twenty-five workers or more.

is greater in inverse proportion to the husband's income. Lack of good day-care facilities, therefore, does not keep women at home but rather harms the children who have to spend the day at makeshift or inferior accommodations.

Trying to find a good day care centre is very difficult. A single mother on welfare, while training for a job, had this to say: "Day care is a nightmare. I've been lucky and found good places, but they've always run out of money because the government eventually cuts the grants so they have to close down. It's a terrible cat-and-mouse game we are playing with innocent children," she said referring to L.I.P.-funded day care projects in Montreal.

Lack of money also means poor standards. Licensing is a provincial responsibility and some provinces do not insist on anything more than fire and safety standards. As a result there are frequent horror stories of how children are mistreated. To avoid third-rate centres, many mothers leave their children with neighbours or babysitters. Even there, however, it is not unusual to hear of children being heavily sedated, tied to bedsteads, or left unsupervised all day.

One Greek immigrant woman who finally found a day care centre for her two children had this to say: "There is no mother who wants to leave her children alone but sometimes you have to. I love my children and don't want to see them hurt. But until a good day care centre opens, I have to leave them locked in the stairway between our apartment and the street entrance. It is too dangerous in the apartment and they are too young to play in the street. I didn't leave them with my friends because all of them work like me."

In another family where both parents work, a three-month-old baby is left alone most of the day. The mother tries to get home at lunch time but often can't. "Sometimes the boss doesn't let me because there is too much work. He tells me there are many other people who want my job. I work because I don't want to lose my husband. If I don't help support the family he will leave me. Other men around here have done that."

Day care is so new in Canada that an argument still rages about who is responsible for it and how it should be organized. Sylva Gelber feels it should be an extension of the provincial educational system. This way standards will be uniform and supervision adequate. The federal government could, in that case, help with some of the funding. Howard Clifford, head of the Day Care Information Centre at the department of National Health and Welfare, thinks it should be attached to community programs. "Parents should have a lot of control over programs. I'm not sure they'd get it if it went under the educational system." Others believe "mixed" public and private support would be best, with employers and government contributing.

The unions do not consider day care their responsibility; however, they are prepared to pressure government for it. "Day care must be provided as a right to every parent," says Shirley Carr, of the Canadian Labour Congress. Ms. Carr feels it should be covered by the regular educational system and "not through welfare". She believes it is "hopeless trying to interest management in it" unless lack of day care means that mothers will not work at all.

CONCLUSION

What is likely to happen to the non-professional working woman in future? We have seen that her status has dropped, in spite of the efforts of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and the women's liberation movement. Equal pay legislation, anti-discrimination programs and status of women councils have not as yet done very much to improve her position.

The declining status of the majority of working women does not mean that society is taking a hardened stand against sex equality. Part of the reason is due to the expansion in the economy of the low-paying clerical and service sectors at the very time when many more women joined the labour force. For this and other reasons, the future does not look particularly optimistic. However, Sylva Gelber still feels there has been a marked change in male attitudes. As a result, women's lot should improve even if, she admits, the statistics do not reflect it yet.

It appears that the status of the majority of working women cannot be significantly improved through anti-discrimination legislation, although strengthened day care and maternity laws could greatly help the situation. Better pay, improved working conditions, and increased career opportunities come about only when women themselves lobby for them.

The most vocal women to date have been the educated middle-class in the managerial and professional sectors of the higher-income brackets. Unfortunately, it is more difficult for women in the low-paying scales, clerical, and service "ghettos" to lobby for improve-

ments. The union movement is probably their key to improved status on the labour market.

We have seen, of course, that the male-dominated union movement has done very little for women so far. Many unions, it has been charged, have become complacent and reluctant to spend the time or the money organizing low-paid, disadvantaged workers. However, as women in unions rise to positions of power and responsibility, they should be able to force their unions to negotiate equality into the contracts.

The next task is to organize the weak, women-dominated industries. Men in the union movement have made it clear they will not do so themselves. It will be up to women organizers to mobilize. Only when pay levels in the female sectors begin to compete with the male-dominated trades will women move beyond their restricted employment ghettos.

The experience over the last eight years, since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, has been that governments will not bring about the structural changes necessary to sexual equality. Therefore, women themselves must take practical steps on a day-to-day basis to improve their status at work, in the union movement, and at home. It is only by waging their battle on many fronts that women will have a chance to win their equality.

The author wishes to thank
Estelle Smith for research
assistance.

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THE HOMEMAKER

SHARON BROWN



A Personal Look at the Homemaker Today

FIRST COMES LOVE

SHARON BROWN

*First comes love
Then comes marriage
Then comes Rita (or Susan or Jeannine, etc.)
With the baby carriage.*

Remember that little rhyme? It was sure to turn up in the autographs and mementos collected from the time we were old enough to write. It appeared in those little imitation-gold-engraved autograph books so popular in the 1940s and 1950s, or scrawled around photos in high school year books. Sometimes someone would scribble a "hope it's with John" or some such line beneath it, and publicly expose the name of the boy you'd secretly had a crush on for months. I don't remember anymore what was written in the boys' books; maybe they didn't even collect autographs. But girls did, and later, perhaps we'll see why.

It was the very rare young girl who didn't grow up believing her life would evolve exactly in that order: love, marriage, babies. And for most of us, that's just what happened.

Leanne, 27, says, "Marriage was the thing to think about. It wasn't a conscious thing you made a decision about. It was the thing that was going to happen. You meet the right man, settle down, get married, and have kids. It's changed now. I think I've realized now you don't have to get married to have a fulfilling life. You can stay single. But at that time you just fell into that way of thinking. You were a woman, you know, you were expected to get married. I think being in a small town had something to do with it.

"There was always the idea of going to college, and getting a degree. Of course, it was still the end thing,

no matter what course you took, to get married. I thought about university, but didn't know what I wanted to do. You could either be a nurse or a teacher and I didn't want to be either. I wanted to find out for myself what I wanted. I felt people were trying to say you should do this, and I'm not that type. I like to make the decisions."

Leanne thinks now that coming from a small town about 100 miles from Halifax may have had something to do with her ready acceptance of love and marriage to her school-teacher husband. But Susan grew up amid the concrete towers of New York, and felt the same impulse. Now at 35, she lives in a suburb in Ottawa, with her scientist husband and three children.

"I never thought about what I would do if I didn't get married," says Susan. "That was my main goal in life — to get married and have children. If you weren't engaged by the time you were in third year at college . . . The dorm was full of bride magazines and the biggest thing was getting the diamond ring and getting the man. I wanted someone to take care of me, so I wouldn't have to take care of myself. I still can't take care of myself, but I take care of everyone else. Now you have more of a choice. Who knew then there was something else."

Pat did, because circumstances forced her to. At 56, she's the mother of ten children, the eldest of whom have now grown up and moved away from their rural Prince Edward Island home. Her husband is a school bus driver. "I was 29 when I got married," she says. "It was during the war, and we lived on a farm. It was rather remote, and we didn't get out to socialize. Then it was the war, and all the boys were gone.

"I have no regrets over waiting to marry. I knew my husband when we were growing up. I had been teaching school and a lot of my friends had gone to Montreal. So I did. I was five years in Montreal, then I had to come home when my younger sister married, and I got another job teaching, but I also worked in a munitions factory for a while.

"It never bothered me that I wasn't married. I suppose it was all in my make-up. There was nobody ever said anything. None of the family really married that young because of the circumstances. Father was a poor man and he died leaving twelve children on a small farm. My older brothers and sisters felt it — the Depression — more than I did. The family was sticking together trying to survive, and my older brother was probably more strict than I think my own father would have been. But my younger sisters married young. By then, things had improved."

THEN WHAT?

This paper is about what happened to Leanne and Susan, Pat and Rita, Michèle and Amy and Jeannine, and all the homemakers like them — all those women who chose and were chosen by love and marriage. It will try to answer the question the little rhyme never thought to ask. Nor did they, then. After love and marriage and the baby carriage, then what?

What about these women our society alternately over-values to the point of deification ("It's as sacred as motherhood.") and overlooks to the point of alienation ("Who me? I'm just a housewife."). It's particularly timely to ask about these women now, when women are re-evaluating their roles, their psyches, their souls; when women "raising consciousness" is not

a local or even national phenomenon, but a worldwide and possibly, if it continues undiminished, revolutionary phenomenon. How do these housewives, homemakers feel? What are they thinking? And what do we think and know about them?

Actually, they are thinking and feeling a great deal — about their families, about themselves, about the way society perceives them, and the way they perceive society, and about this phenomenon which for lack of a better phrase has been popularly dubbed "women's liberation."

It's the other side of the coin, unfortunately, that's tarnished from too little examination. For when it comes to what we know about them — these housewives and mothers — we find we know very little. Statistics, social science, the media, even women's liberation tell us not a lot.

The statisticians overlook them as a separate identifiable group. Nowhere in the vast, almost innumerable compilations of Statistics Canada does there exist the simplest of numbers; namely, just exactly how many housewives are there in this country? Unless they are also in the labour force, what little statistical information that is available about these homemakers and mothers is derivative, and falls more honestly into the realm of "guesstimate" than legitimate statistical endeavour.

The social scientists lump them en masse into something called the family: The index of most of the typical texts rarely points to "Housewife, housewives, p. 312." More often, it says, "See under family, mother, wife, married woman, role of." Rarely is this woman —

mother, wife, married woman — examined for herself, as an individual, and as we shall see, rarely does she examine herself that way. Cause and effect, effect and cause, who is to say? Certainly not the social scientists, at least not yet.

In the media, while creators of television and radio commercials may subconsciously acknowledge the housewives' power as consumer, nonetheless they most often patronize them as if they were children or idolize them as glamour girls. All too often, the housewife is portrayed as a harried, bedraggled creature only too eager to accept the fatherly advice of the suitably white-haired man from Glad about how to keep her kiddies' sandwiches fresh. Either that, or she becomes the fiery siren greeting her husband at the door in a flimsy negligée with a martini in her hand.

Even the phenomenon of women's liberation, theoretically a spontaneous creation of sisterhood among all women, too frequently denigrates the housewife, arousing in her feelings of envy because she's not out there pursuing a fabulous career, and/or feelings of guilt because she doesn't really need the extra money.

In fact, the women's liberation movement, whose banner has been so enthusiastically taken up by so many mostly "working" women and a few highly conspicuous men, is for the housewife a threat — a threat to the only self-image she has been able to hold intact. It is the image of herself in the role society told her over and over was *THE* role: wife and mother. Still, because the primary emphasis of the women's movement has been directed toward working women, or more correctly, toward women in the labour force, the full-time housewife often finds difficulty identifying with its pub-

licized aims. Occasionally, the underlying hostility she may feel manifests itself in an assertive self-defense of her own worth. Does she protest too much? It's an interesting observation that with the exception of only one or two women interviewed here, until the question was directly asked, the subject of the women's liberation movement and the issues generally associated with it — day care, abortion, matrimonial property laws, to name a few — simply did not come up.

What subjects did come up then? What subjects form the package of interests and concerns in their lives? My husband, my family, my house, my children, my marriage, my husband's job, my husband's career, my parents, or my in-laws, not necessarily in that order. My self? Rarely. By and large, the subject of "my self" as a legitimate, involving centre of concern takes precedence only for those women whose process of questioning or "consciousness raising" has taken a firm hold.

So who then is this woman we call wife, mother, housewife, homemaker, or even as one woman ventured, domestic manager. We think we know who she is: We have images of her not only in those roles, but also doubling as cook, maid, charwoman, laundress, hostess, chauffeur, record-keeper, bill-payer, seamstress, gardener, repair person, nutritionist, nurse, friend, companion, lover. Yet these are only some of her different roles — the names given to jobs she does; they don't delineate her character, unveil her individuality, or reveal her as a person.

THE STATISTICS, LACK OF

Exactly how many homemakers — women who work full-time keeping the home and raising the children — are there in Canada? Turning to Statistics Canada, we

learn that data from the 1971 Census show there are 895,330 married women with "spouses present" who have never been in the labour force; there are 1,528,640 such women who were not part of the labour force at the time of the Census; there are 4,558,265 women over the age of fifteen who have spouses present; there are 3,020,805 women over the age of fifteen who have spouses present and who are not in the "experienced labour force" and have not been employed in the last eighteen months.

"But that doesn't tell us exactly how many homemakers (housewives?) there are," I say. "Housewives," replies the Statistics Canada official, "have never been considered as an occupation in an economic sense." This means, then, that there really is no exact figure compiled on the number of people in the country who are homemakers or housewives. In the volumes and volumes of statistical information, these otherwise precise and meticulous statisticians can do little more than guide the curious to a rough guess at the number of homemakers in Canada.

Roughly, the number is somewhere between 2.5- and 4.5-million. This number is arrived at by subtracting what the woman isn't, rather than by adding up what she is. After we have eliminated from the 11-plus million Canadian females, those who are under the age of 15, those who are single, widowed, divorced, separated, deserted and abandoned, those who are not in the labour force, those who are not in prisons or otherwise confined to institutions, we arrived at the not very accurate 2.5- to 4.5-million figure.

Nor do we really know who they are. We can surmise: Again by the process of elimination, it could be said that most of Canada's homemakers are those women

who are not forced into the labour force by reason of economic necessity. Those married women with children who really need the money to supplement the husband's income are out there in the labour force supplementing it whether they want to or not. So are many widows, divorcées, deserted wives and single parents. Therefore, homemakers might be best described as those wives and mothers who have chosen to make their careers in the home because they honestly feel this offers them the most personal self-fulfillment. Economically, of course, they are free to make this choice. Probably the only exceptions would be those homemakers whose husbands adamantly refuse to allow them to take jobs outside the home.

Homemakers are not solely confined to city, or suburb, or rural community, or farm, or village. They are well-represented in both urban and rural environments, and are found in all ten provinces and both territories. The women interviewed in these pages range in age from 25 to 56; they have husbands employed at a variety of jobs from school bus driver to farmer to scientist; they have from one to ten children; and they live in big cities, smaller towns, rural villages and farms from one end of the country to the other.

While the trappings of location and circumstances may vary, while their personal opinions about specific issues vary, for the most part, they all share a strong belief that the work of raising children and keeping a home — which they do full-time — is a vital career. In differing degrees, they also harbour the nagging suspicion that they are the only ones who sincerely believe that this is a valid career.

U.S. author and social critic Elizabeth Janeway in her *Study in Social Mythology: Man's World, Woman's Place*

discusses the origins of this duality of feeling among homemakers. "Women at home, working at their own pace in their own place, are protected from the harsh pressures and boring burdens of making a living in the world of commerce and industry. They are out of the rat race. But by the same token, they are not in the running for its prizes. They experience the success meted out by the external world only through others and not on their own account. It is part of their role, that is, to live vicariously."⁽¹⁾

Janeway points out that this vicarious existence sets up a time lag in the homemaker's life. Change is longer in reaching her, and the rewards she garners are neither public "nor comparable" to those of others. The rewards, she says, "are valuable on a different scale, in a different frame of reference," resulting in a loss of "a means of judging one's own value by objective standards." Children get feedback from parents and teachers; students, from the grades they earn; those in the labour force, by their salaries and promotions. Homemakers are pretty much the only group in our society faced with this problem.

The psychological effect of this lack produces an introverted type of reasoning, Janeway continues. "Women at home, therefore, can judge the success and the meaningfulness of their lives only by personal, emotional values... Self-satisfaction at one end, self-pity at the other—these are the poles... They are not mutually exclusive. One woman may experience and act out both. If fear of confronting the wide world keeps one at home, it is very likely that one will set up mental barriers against the world outside and reject oppor-

tunities to know it better. At the same time, one may feel uneasily and inescapably that everything is happening somewhere else, that one is not only isolated but excluded from the centers of life."

Typically, the homemaker is most likely to be middle-class, with her husband earning enough money to support the family comfortably. This gives her the choice of whether or not to work for paid employment. Increasingly, the woman able to make this choice is becoming a rare species. Most of her working-class counterparts do not have the luxury of deciding they will stay at home and raise their children; they must work. The homemaker can choose; and she chooses to stay at home because she regards homemaking as a career.

Amy, 25, mother of one young son, retired from teaching when her son was born. She lives in Fredericton, with her husband who works with computers. "I've always felt like that, that it's a career. I told the principal when I started teaching that I was planning to take a few years off when I had a child and I might not be back at all. Homemaking in itself is a career, although it's impossible to convince the general public of that."

"Like when they enumerate you," Susan adds, "they say, 'do you work.' I say yes. They say, 'what do you do?' I say I'm a homemaker. Then they write down housewife and tell me they're not allowed to write homemaker. Sure, maybe it's not such a big thing. But dammit I'm not married to the house."

"The thing that makes me so upset about being a homemaker or housewife or whatever you want to call it—that's not what's important—is that everyone assumes it's not work. Last night, one of the kids woke

⁽¹⁾Elizabeth Janeway, *Man's World, Woman's Place*. New York: Wm. Morrow, 1971. Pages 163 — 177.

up, and I got up and gave her cough medicine. That's another thing, you know, people don't know why women are exhausted. Because they have responsibility 24 hours a day. Very few men get up at night with a sick kid. It's a responsibility for human life that goes on round the clock, and to pull it off successfully is quite a feat. And what really pisses me off is the husbands' attitude: Oh, you all get together all day and have coffee, that's not work.

"Ha! It's constantly taking care of something that never lets up. I think it's the non-stop aspect of it. In housework, you don't do anything that doesn't get messed up again. There is never a finished product. When you finish this report, you will have something to show for it. When I finish scrubbing the floor, someone will walk on it."

Perhaps that's why so many homemakers view their careers with a mixture of high regard and questioning ambivalence. On the one hand, she has a job—a full-time one, particularly when her children are small. On the other, she hasn't, because she produces no product and earns no money for her work. Living in a society that accords status in direct ratio to dollars earned, she feels she lacks status in the eyes of others.

Amy says, "I feel a majority of people think the role of homemaker is degrading—it's not a career, it's a stop-gap. Maybe you stay home when your child is a baby because all agree that babies need attention. But by the time he's three or four, you should be getting ready to go back to your career and "fulfil" yourself.

"I taught school till the eighth month of my pregnancy. I got a lot of negative pressure—my son is 20 months — about not going back, not from my husband

who's very amenable. But for instance, other teachers who said, we'll see you in the fall. I said no, you won't. I feel very bad about that, because I feel if I stay home I've lost my brains or else I never had them. It's just very difficult to cope, constantly receiving this negative reinforcement about staying home. They see my role of homemaker as a menial one, and they can't see that my husband isn't holding a rope around me to keep me at home. They seem to feel that you only have brains if you're out working. I've given up trying to justify it. I used to try and finally stopped."

Michèle is a French-Canadian woman, 43, originally from the Winnipeg area, married to an administrator. She is now raising her seven children in an Edmonton suburb. They range in age from 19 to five. "Children make demands," she says matter of factly. "That's why I don't feel I should go out to work."

Pat says, "I definitely think my family would have suffered if I had gone out to work. Now that the youngest is almost eleven, I do wonder if maybe I should get a job. But I also wonder if I'm still not needed. Kids don't like to come home to an empty house. No one does. I think that's very important. I always try to stay within shouting distance when the kids come home from school. I think to have mother there when they come from school is so important. One particular day, I had nothing for dinner, so I dashed out to the store and met someone who likes to chat as much as I do. Well, the kids came home and didn't find me. They immediately called my husband. And they weren't little tots. Four were in high school that year."

For others, like Rita, the duality is harder to cope with. Rita is 37. She and her engineer husband are raising

their two daughters in midtown Montreal. "It's annoying to me. It's very honourable and necessary work, being a homemaker. That's one of the problems with women who stay at home. They do feel denigrated a lot of the time. What value do they have except that everyone is pro-motherhood? It's only honourable in the sense that everyone agrees she should be there but it's not honourable as a part of the labour force. I've read that if the labour of housewives were withdrawn, the economy would collapse, because it's based on so much of their unpaid labour.

"There should be rewards for those who want to have families seriously. The idea of parenthood is not taken seriously. I think maybe we should have to take some courses in parenting and face the fact that someone is prepared to stay home and raise the kids. Parenthood should be a privileged and rewarded state. It should be a profession. I don't think the government cares about the plight of families yet."

Jeannine, 38, echoes some of Rita's feelings, but more gently. She is raising her three children on the farm near Harris, Sask. which she works with her husband. "The prestige of the housewife seems to have deteriorated, I think. Either the schools or mothers are not teaching how time-consuming raising a family can be if done properly. There's no pride anymore in having healthy children, no more social status than having a new car. There's no social status in having happy, healthy children. When the time comes for having children, the only preparation most of them take is stopping birth control. How many young women go on a special diet. We put our ewes on a special diet when they get ready to have lambs. You'd be surprised at how much research on this goes on at agricultural schools. I

wonder what would happen if the same amount of research went into having healthy babies. I do a lot of thinking. If you're out on the tractor from seven in the morning to seven at night, you get lots of time to think."

SALARIES FOR HOUSEWORK?

Whether regarded as a profession or not, the controversial question of whether or not the homemaker should receive a salary for her work elicits in women reactions ranging from surprised indifference to ambivalence to avowal. A recent Gallop Poll,⁽²⁾ taken in April, 1975, asked, "Would you favor (sic) or oppose a government payment, from taxes, of a wage or salary to housewives who stay home to look after their home and family?" Nationally, 49 per cent of all those polled responded in favour. Fifty-two per cent of women, but only 46 per cent of men answered affirmatively. Regionally, the Atlantic provinces, Québec and British Columbia had the highest percentage of favourable response: 56 per cent in favour in the Atlantic provinces; 61 per cent in Québec; and 56 per cent in B.C. Least in favour were those in the Prairies and Ontario: 36 per cent in the first; 41 per cent in Ontario.

An idea whose time is perhaps slowly coming, the issue is being studied with some degree of seriousness by several national and international sectors. Several U.S. academics have approached the question from the point of view of time-use — attempting to deter-

⁽²⁾It should be pointed out that the Gallop Poll is conducted among a cross-section of all Canadians. This survey was not confined exclusively to homemakers, nor is it actually known how many full-time homemakers were among those polled.

mine what work the homemaker does, how much time she devotes to each task, and what monetary value may be assigned to it. Both Kathryn Walker and William Gauger at Cornell University, and Dr. Geraldine Page at Pennsylvania State University, have contributed valuable time-use information. The Chase Manhattan Bank of New York produced an informal study in 1970 called "What's a Wife Worth?" based on interviews with families of Wall Street employees. It totalled up 12 different jobs, ranging from nursemaid to dishwasher to seamstress — jobs to which housewives devoted 99.6 hours a week. It then assigned current per hour rates to them, and arrived at a total weekly value of housewife services of \$257.53. However, the Bank noted that its survey was informal, advising that, "We feel it essential to caution against its representation as a statistically authoritative source."

Here in our own country, a study of 500 French-Canadian women⁽³⁾ not in the labour force showed they spent an average of 21.6 hours per week doing housework; 14 hours on meals; 14 hours on exclusive care of their children; 6.2 hours on other duties.

Economists have been looking at the question of imputing a value to homemaking services for many years, with the aim of including its value in the total measure of a nation's goods and services — the Gross National Product (GNP). For many, this measurement of the work done and its monetary evaluation is the first step to determining some form of remuneration for homemakers. The question has not escaped the attention of Sylva Gelber, Director of the federal Labour Depart-

ment's Women's Bureau. On more than one occasion, she has pointed out "The failure of economists and statisticians to include as a national asset . . . the value of unpaid services provided by women within their own homes..."⁽⁴⁾ Gelber notes that the advantages of including the value of housework in the GNP would be both materially and psychologically beneficial: On the one hand, it would entitle homemakers to a type of equity in many social service programs, such as the Canada Pension Plan or Adult Retraining Programs; and on the other, it could lead to "a more positive attitude on the part of society to housework services." She points out that studies done in Britain and the U.S., among other countries, have determined that inclusion of such service in the GNP could increase its value by anywhere from 25 to 44 per cent. This means that if one assigned a dollar value to housework, the total value of all that work could equal from one-quarter to nearly one-half the value of *all* goods and services produced in the nation.

"Perhaps the time has come," Gelber said in 1969,⁽⁵⁾ "when those who provide the services should bring pressure to bear on the social scientists . . . Housewives who provide the services have too long remained the 'silent servicers.' They should place a value on themselves and should insist on a value as (sic) being placed on the unpaid domestic services which they provide."

⁽⁴⁾From Speech: "The Labour Force; The G.N.P.; and Unpaid House-keeping Services," reprinted in *Women's Bureau '70*, Canada Department of Labour, Ottawa.

⁽⁵⁾From Speech: "Housework Services: The Orphan in Economic Reckoning," reprinted in *Women's Bureau '69*, Canada Department of Labour, Ottawa.

⁽³⁾Reported in le magazine *Châteline*, juillet, 1972, (French-language edition).

Queen's University economist, Oli Hawrylyshyn examines some of the proposals for including housewives' services in the GNP in a publication for Statistics Canada.⁽⁶⁾ He points out that "since market substitutes (for household work) exist, and have perhaps been used in different proportions over time, exclusion of the non-market part of these services from GNP biases the growth estimates." To include the value of housewives' work in the GNP would have both economic and social reason, he says, because it would provide solid evidence that homemakers contribute to the economy — a fact that, at present, even very few homemakers believe.

On the other side of the coin, however, Hawrylyshyn points out that there are practical problems to be faced in actually determining a dollar value for household work. For example, he asks, how does one measure and evaluate time spent preparing meals or ironing while watching television, and "is one hour of housework today more productive than in 1900?"

The question of placing a dollar value on the work of the homemaker and including that in the GNP has even greater implications for the entire economic system of industrialized nations. If one argues successfully for inclusion of the housewives' services in the GNP, one must also ask whether household maintenance chores performed by husbands, volunteer work, leisure time and recreational activities, and even "quality of life" considerations shouldn't be included as well. Assuming an accurate method of evaluating all this work in monetary terms can be arrived at, the national

record-keeping system would have to be altered to accommodate these inclusions. If the national implications of this are staggering, there are international ramifications as well, since statistics emanating from Canada would no longer bear comparable relation to those of other countries.

However, all these complex and perhaps confusing economic considerations rarely come into play when one casually asks the question: Should housewives receive a salary for the work they do in the home? So while the experts think about it and explore its possibilities and ramifications, homemakers, for the most part, aren't giving it too much thought — except, however, for certain groups who have begun to lobby for some form of monetary compensation or some form of tax credits in recognition of their work.

"The assumption made about the family is that it is a social unit, not an economic one..." says June Menzies,⁽⁷⁾ Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. "...this thesis is so much a part of our moral philosophy that even today many people consider it offensive to speak of the work in the home as being economic in nature... But reality cannot be denied. Work in the home is an economically productive activity that provides useful goods and services to the members of the family and to the economy. These goods and services are essential to the survival of the society."

⁽⁶⁾Oli Hawrylyshyn, "A Review of recent proposals for modifying and extending the measure of GNP," Catalogue No. 13-558, Ottawa, Statistics Canada.

⁽⁷⁾June Menzies, "With All My Worldly Goods: The Economic Position of the Woman in the Family" — Speech to the Conference on Homemaking and the Family, River Falls, Wisc., May 9, 1974.

Menzies believes that this work has gone unrewarded long enough, and argues that the situation “has become intolerable and can no longer be sustained.” Asking, “How can our society elect to ignore the creation of economic wealth of this magnitude?” she cites William Gauger’s flat statement that “If men were the ones who normally did the household work, it would always have been included in the gross national product.”

The homemakers interviewed here are of diverse opinion on the question, probably reflecting the fifty-fifty split in opinion of society in general as shown in the recent Gallop Poll.

PAT: “Where would the salaries come from? People are so dependent on the government now, it’s revolting. You know what would happen then, people like you would have to keep feeding the pot. I always preached, give it to the people who really need it, but not all the people. I do think that housewives should be in the Canada Pension Plan, though, because what are they going to live on? They make a generous contribution.”

MICHÈLE: “I really don’t know. I really haven’t been aware of this. One of the reasons my husband works is so he can pay a lot of income tax. If they paid salaries to housewives, my husband’s taxes would go up. It would just go out of one back pocket into another. Like family allowances. When they raised it substantially, everyone said that’s great. But now, we have to pay taxes on it. Besides, unless there’s a total lack of communication between husband and wife, whose money is it? After all, I handle most of the family finances. It’s not really very important. I can’t see women feeling it’s important that they have a salary. If they want money, they can always go to work.”

JEANNINE: “I’ve never found enough details on it. If I got a salary, would I have to pay my husband? Would I have to buy my own car? Would I have to pay my husband for gas for his? Would that mean we didn’t have a partnership anymore?

“Personally, I think that’s the stupidest idea I’ve ever heard. I don’t like to see everything given recognition through money. I don’t like to see money as the prize for everything you do. If the results are good, there’s personal satisfaction. I think a person should learn to do things for personal satisfaction. There’s only so much money, and I don’t think the government should be depended upon for everything.”

LEANNE: “Not in my situation. I don’t feel I could sit down and say, you give me this much in wages, I’m worth this and this. It’s part of being a mother, a homemaker.”

SUSAN: “Actually, we are paid — the baby bonus — which is a hell of a lot more than you get in the States. But it still makes me upset that I do so much, and don’t get paid for it in any way. Sure, I think housewives should be paid, but I don’t know by whom. That’s really the problem. Now how many times have they added up what we do. I mean you pay a maid. I don’t know. I just haven’t figured out yet who should pay us.”

AMY: “I don’t think anybody in this world could afford to pay a housewife what she’s worth. First of all, if you approach it as a professional, you’ve got to be a good cleaning lady; you’ve got to be a good cook; you’ve got to be a good educator, and so on. And what kind of figure could you set on it? If you want to get really catty about it, what else are you? Because it doesn’t require any formal education or training. Some people are

miserably unhappy about it, and if you're unhappy, you don't do a good job, no matter what the job is. So the woman who's miserably staying at home should go out to work, and leave the job of homemaker, as they say, 'to them what wants to do it.' "

RITA: "One thing I resent about homemaking is that I feel I'm exploited. I feel I'm doing a very valuable job and not getting paid for it. I think it ought to be state-supported. Sure, my husband gives me money. But should he have to, even though he makes enough for us both to live on?"

THE JOB DESCRIPTION

While discussion of whether or not housewives should be paid elicits mixed reaction, more fundamental are the questions: What exactly should they be paid for? What work do they do?

Elizabeth Janeway has noted that there is no job description for the homemaker.⁽⁸⁾ Unless one is a passionate follower of soap commercials, and believes their word to be holy, there are no requirements and no standards for the job; there are no merit rewards and no promotions.

Of all workers, the homemaker has one of the few jobs that allows a person to work alone in a self-contained plant — the home. Unless she meets with other homemakers regularly, or goes out to shop or to meetings, she is alone all day — except for the company of infants and pre-schoolers — from the time her family finishes breakfast until they return for dinner. During that

time, she does her job, but actually, she's on the job all the time.

And the specific duties of the job vary little from urban Montreal to rural P.E.I. to agricultural Saskatchewan, although the homemaker on the farm may take on farming work as well. Nevertheless, a homemaker is a mother is a cook is a jill of all trades.

LEANNE: "My daytime hours are pretty well divided between household duties, children, and neighbours or friends dropping in, or you go there. When John is sleeping, if I have some volunteer work to do, I do it then. It's mostly stuff I can do at home. My mother always cleaned house on Friday, and I do it, too, but I don't get upset if it doesn't work out that way. I spend a lot of time with my son, and I don't get upset if my housework doesn't get done then.

"I don't feel as a homemaker that my duty is to stay home all the time and make beds. Part of it is to socialize, to learn about society, the community, public affairs. It's not just within the confines, the walls of the home. I find being a housewife, and a mother, you can get as busy as you want. I find there aren't enough hours in the day. My day doesn't end till after midnight most nights. I'm always finding jobs within the house to better the house — refinishing furniture or fixing something. Then there's my volunteer work and sports. I don't have a routine. I don't set goals for the day."

RITA: "Homemaking is a very personal matter. It's the right thing in terms of my needs. I need to be my own boss. I've found this the enormous advantage of being a housewife. The administrative duties of a housewife probably are greater than those of a corporation presi-

⁽⁸⁾Janeway, *op. cit.*

dent, more perhaps because she usually carries out her own directives.

"For the last ten years, we've lived in a two-storey house with a garden in the city of Montreal. It's very green around here with lots of parks and backyards. But these houses are all stuck together. There are lanes between them, but you're still right next door to your neighbour, and you see each other going in and out all the time. There was a time when I got involved with the neighbours but now I find myself wanting to be a hermit.

"Between 3:30 and 9, my time is pretty much my daughters'. They need people around to relate to. My husband does a lot. He shares the household administration and housework, and does a lot of afternoon stuff with the kids. But he feels as a parent that he isn't allowed enough time for family life and he has a full day to put in at the office. Sometimes I feel bad that he doesn't have enough time to himself. Nor do I. Now I'm trying to make more time. At times, I've felt swallowed up, felt we couldn't exist as separate beings, separate from the "family". It's a fragmentation of personality. At one moment, you're one thing; at another, another. Wife, mother, volunteer, professional. It blows the mind when you have to play these multiple roles. I never get enough personal space. I still haven't worked that out. It's a problem in family life — not just for me, for the husband, maybe even for the kids.

"I figure I work about an 18-hour day between the household management . . . Between 7 and 9, it's wild with getting people, breakfasts, school lunches, etc. organized. After 9, I might start working on some writing or some voluntary project. Right now I'm totally immersed in gardening and painting. I'm painting

two rooms. It's not like scooping up dust that comes back the next day.

"But I get frustrated because I can't do anything without stopping, like to make a meal. My day usually ends at midnight or one o'clock, and very often I'm doing housework until then.

"Homemaking can be a full-time routine, if you're really conscientious. But then you can fall into the martyr trap. I really was super-mother, making all my own bread etc., but I gave it up. Oh, and I may spend a half-day talking to somebody I choose — not a neighbour.

"I really do like the freedom. The idea of being my own boss is very important to me. I don't have to carry out somebody else's dumb decision."

JEANNINE: "That's just me — if I had spare time, I'd fill it. Others (on farms) don't work as much as I do outside the house. Now, all the modern conveniences are in the farm home, and that's changed things. I can only think of one farm around here that has no running water. We've had running water for twelve years, since the children were very small.

"We've three sections (1920 acres) and this is medium to large. It's a lot for us. We work our land ourselves. We grow wheat and oats, and all our own alfalfa for the sheep.

"We have a two-storey house, an old farm home, twelve miles from the nearest town. I guess there's probably an acre and a half for our yard, and a long barn, and quonset for the grain storage when we have a

shortage, and the machinery. My garden takes about three city blocks.

"Right now, first of May, things start to get hectic, with seeding. We have to be on the land. My husband works the fallow land first. It all has to be timed just so. You've got to spray for the wild oats before the wheat starts to grow. The other day we were up at 5:30 to start spraying.

"If my husband wants to go directly to the field, I do the chores. If not, we get up early, 5:30 or 6, and have breakfast. Then I might do the laundry, or I like to bake — I make whole wheat, white bread and buns. I always like to do that early. The kids leave for school at 8. Or there's my garden. I have a very large vegetable garden. We don't have to buy. I froze 85 quarts of peas last year, and I still have about 30 bags of beans in the freezer, and carrots and potatoes. If the weather's bad, I tan my own sheep skins. I've done a lot of that; that's one of my hobbies.

"Last year, I rodweeded, while he was spraying the oats. What is it? Well, it's a machine, about 36 feet long, and it travels two inches under the soil, and the wheat is seeded below that. When you seed, you pre-work the soil; a press drill forces the seed down into the seedbed which is hard and wet. But above that, you can be killing the weeds.

"I do more fieldwork at haying time, from mid-June to the end of July. Then I drive combine in the fall. We don't let our kids work, it's too dangerous and the machinery is complex. When you get into harvest, it's another job where you're always under pressure. The worst thing that can happen is it gets rained out. So you

put in these long hours. Some years, harvest can go to the middle of October. Last fall, it all froze.

"You do a lot of driving here too. You don't have any choice on the farm. The children are always going somewhere and it's twelve miles to town. In the winter, I'm there twice a day.

"Another job I've taken over in the last couple of years is the books. Only the books I do are strictly for income tax and for that you have to keep track of every little repair. We joined a government-sponsored method of doing your books. You do everything once a month, and I send it to Guelph and it comes back with all the information about how much depreciation and so on. It only costs \$50 a year. It tells you how much money you've made or lost, how much it costs to grow a bushel of wheat, everything.

"In winter, it slacks off. But there's still the sheep to look after. They've got to be examined for parasites, and their teeth have to be checked. In the fall, there's a lot of canning. In February, lambing begins, and they have to be watched 24 hours a day. We take turns. If you're on lambing duty, you hate like heck to go and get one of the men out of bed. You learn to cope. The only advantage you have over the men is that you know how long it (the birth) will take."

MICHÈLE: "I'm up at seven. My husband goes to work at eight. I do a quick clean-up after everyone's at school. But I don't believe in being a slave, although I believe breakfast is very important. I might do some washing or laundry. My youngest is still home in the morning, and the kids still come home for lunch. In the afternoon, between one and two, that's my free time. I don't always go out. I might do some sewing, or

watch tv, or whatever I feel like. If I do go out, I'm usually home by three, because the junior high kids are home by then, and if they have to go to the dentist or whatever, this is the time. Between four and five, I cook supper, and we usually have an early meal so we can have a long evening.

"I believe in delegating. I have six boys and one girl. I believe you can teach your boys to cook or do the wash. I tell them, go to the machine, and push this knob here. I don't say if they want something cleaned, I'll do it. I tell them to learn to do it themselves. Like dusting, my daughter got bored. So I said, okay, one of the boys can do it. About the chores, well, why can't girls mow the lawn?"

PAT: "I have ten children. The oldest is 27 and the youngest is ten, and the oldest now has two little boys, and it's just as if I didn't stop at all. They live next door, and they're in and out about fifteen times a day. I have a very active house, not a very clean one.

"I put in a very busy day and never sit. I do the gardening and put in the vegetable garden myself. My husband, I wouldn't say he's useless, but he doesn't like to help around the house. We have a large house, this keeps me busy. It makes for a lot of work — a three-storey house, six large bedrooms on the second floor and on the third floor, two large bedrooms. We do own a smaller bungalow which my husband's father gave us, but the kids say, you couldn't think of selling home; that's home.

"My husband comes home for lunch. His office is just five miles away. He normally comes home because he's one of those who has to have his little catnap at lunch. He goes at an awful rate of speed and needs a little siesta

at noon. The children don't come home at noon. My husband, he likes a hot meal at lunch with his vegetables and all, and I cook at night, too. I think I spoil them, don't you?

"Something I never wanted was money. You know, I like to have enough but... I mean to pay for groceries. I grow all our own vegetables. We're still eating last year's. I have eight acres, but not all of it is good for gardening. I have all my seeds ready for transplanting now.

"I do all my own baking. I have to do that baking. Once in a while, I buy a loaf of bread. But I only bake bread once a week, but then I make 24 loaves at a time. I'm married to a guy that won't eat a slice of baker's bread. It was so funny when we went out to our son's graduation from the Mounties last year, and our other son flew down from the Yukon where he'd been working, they said, both of them, the only thing I really miss is your homemade bread."

SUSAN: "How I spend my time? I never sit down to do anything, because there's always an interruption. The dogs get out, or somebody falls and gets hurt. Last year was the first time I ever had any time to myself, when Andrea was in nursery school, and somebody pointed out to me that this was time I could spend by myself. I always ran to someone's for coffee. I have never ever been alone. I have never had total personal privacy, and when I got it, I was scared. I went from my family to college, to being married, and six months later, I was pregnant.

"Now I do a minimum of cleaning, laundry, making breakfast, lunch and dinner, and in between, I prepare a lot of snacks, and when I'm alone, I do macramé, and

that's the only thing I ever created outside of food and babies. It's sort of a shit life; yet, I'm very happy.

"I think it's not laziness that I don't do these things. Like I refuse to set the table. It's that I hate to serve. It started further back when I started to say to my husband, don't sit back and give orders. I don't like feeling totally responsible for everything that goes on in the house, or for that matter, for the kids.

"He says he's changed. But he really doesn't do anything, only if I stand up. Unless we have a party, then he'll clean up totally. I don't want to do this by myself. It's not my house and my kids alone.

"It's stupid, this passionate making the house clean. You don't offer your kids anything by doing that. You would be amazed how many women let their babies cry because they have to get the housework done."

AMY: "Friends say, Gee, I've never seen you looking so well. I think it's a reflection of my lifestyle. And better still, I can do what I like when I like. When I was working, I never had the time. Even though my husband helped, still when two people get home from work, you're tired. I like to sew, I like to read, I play violin, piano and guitar and I spend a lot of time studying music. I make all my own clothes now, and some for my son. I entertain my son, and my husband survives my singing.

"It's really a self-indulgent type of life. But I still have laundry to do and floors to wash.

"I live in your average — actually, I hope it's a little nicer than average — three-bedroom bungalow. It's in a sub-division, with a large lot, that's now wall-to-

wall mud, but we'll have a lawn someday. We hope it's a convenience house, we designed it. It's a lived-in house, furnished in late relative and early junk, but that's okay.

"There's the stereotyped picture of the housewife, who watches soap operas and ... well, we have a neighbourhood crafts night, and when I was first invited, I thought ugh. But it was really very interesting and we talked about everything from the houses we live in to drainage problems. I like old furniture that I might want to refinish and we talked about different techniques to do that. Everybody has some sort of talent. I learned all sorts of things. And yet, if I say I go to crafts night, people look at me like, boy, not only are you a housewife, but you're consorting with housewives! You mean you actually spend a night talking about housewife things! If people would only allow for that, but no, a tremendous number of people want other people to fit into a category."

THE REAL JOB: MOTHERING

For most of the housewives, one discerns an unspoken distinction between job and career. If homemaking is the job, mothering is the real career. Acting on the belief that the role of mother is not "just a job," they remain at home to carry on a career — that of mother. That is the REAL reason they're not out there in the labour force.

Amy explains: "I personally feel it's important for a mother to be around. I didn't want to miss my child's infancy. I didn't want someone from a day-care centre telling me he started to walk today. I didn't want to miss out on the pleasures of his development. I defi-

nately would not even consider going to work for at least another four years, when he's of school age, and probably not until he's of junior high school age.

"The things that are important to a child are important immediately, not at 5:30 when you get home from work and have to start dinner. Children develop a better self-concept when you listen to them, and you can't listen to them when you're tired. I know I couldn't have come home from work and faced a young child with a lot of demands. I have time to sit down with him and give him crayons, etc. I can help to educate him on a personal level.

"I did a study of day-care centres and observed several of them. In one, a little boy couldn't see the book and kept asking to see. And the teacher said, well, if you can't see it, you must need glasses. If that was the best, what's the worst like?

"People forget how rewarding it is watching a child grow. I've taken several courses at university in child development to learn how to make his development better. If you are a professional, once in a while you do upgrading courses. But nobody looks at homemaking that way. There are courses in everything. Maybe there are courses you should take in child development. People say who needs training to be a parent. They don't realize it's one of the most demanding jobs, and one we are least prepared for.

"My son likes dolls. He has a couple of stuffed ones. Recently, I was visiting some friends, and several of the kids were playing. When one of them asked his mother to buy him a doll, the mother was horrified. So I said, why not? He's got to learn fathering just as a girl would learn mothering, and one way to do it is in a play

situation where learning can be gentle. Boys do have to learn some of the domestic arts. I bake my own bread, and when I do, I give my son some dough, and he plays at making bread. He's interested, so why can't he help me cook. I can't see allowing that type of stereotype.

"My mother saved a lot of books I had as a child and I started reading them again. Ugh, I don't really want my child to read them. The only time the girls get adventures is when the boys come along to protect them."

PAT: "The two oldest are married; the third works in Edmonton; the next is with the RCMP; one is at university in engineering. One boy dropped out of school, and went on a youth exchange program to Africa; now he hopes his experience will work toward school credits. I have another boy just finishing grade twelve; two girls—the fifteen-year-old is very active, with the Rangers and student council and you name it. I'm very thankful for this — my kids — and I don't mean to be bragging."

JEANNINE: "We got married at Easter. I had no intentions of working after I was married. I just felt that was enough, and we knew if we were going to have children, we had to have them right away. My husband was 30 at the time. I was ready to get married and have children. That's a full-time job...when they're small. As they've gotten older and they've become more independent, I've worked outside the home on the farm. I didn't then.

"I have three children and they have a total of two cavities. Everyone used to say how lucky you are. I took this lucky bit for about five years, and now I say, it

wasn't luck. I worked very hard to achieve that. Is it because there's no prestige in the results?

"Another thing about farm kids. When they do something, they want to do it socially, whereas in the city, you crave seclusion.

"Watching the lambs I think about the mothering instinct. When a woman has a child in hospital, they take it away from you. I only know I carried it for nine months, and was in labour for three days with the first one, and they take it away and feed it sugar and water for the first 24 hours. I wanted my baby so badly. The mothering instinct takes over, and it's a pretty stiff drive, especially if you're married to the man you want to be married to and have babies with."

SUSAN: "I have a real hostility towards — it's not men, really. I just feel women have been very deliberately robbed of functioning as biologically complete people. I'm not saying you should have kids if you don't want them. But for those of us who want them, we should be able to have them with dignity, to bear and carry them with dignity, to be able to deliver them by yourself without being knocked on the head and waking up an hour later. One of the biological functions of the woman is to reproduce, and if she wants to have children, she should not be controlled by outside forces, and she is.

"I feel very strongly about this. I've always felt if you're going to be a mother, that was the most important thing you could do. I think I've made some very fine people. I've created three happy, relatively healthy people. I've done the world a service by putting these three on the earth.

"But when you have a baby, they stick you on a table. You're tied down with metal straps, and my ass was at the end of the table so that if the baby came out, it would have fallen on the floor and the placenta with it. In my way of thinking, it's a deliberate negation of my functioning as a woman. It's a humiliating experience. And after it's over, they take the baby away. You do that to any other animal, and it won't take the baby back. Many women don't believe this, but I think that's what causes post-partum depression. It's a hormonal thing.

"Then they tell you you can only nurse your baby sitting up, or that you can't take it in bed with you because you might fall asleep and roll on it. Now who but a pig would roll on it! And you see, our breasts have become such a sex symbol that you can't breast-feed your baby in public.

"Now looking back on it, I'm aware of the kind of experience I should have had. I realized with my last baby that my baby and I were one thing, and I would respond to her needs the way my insides told me to. It was the first time I felt fulfilled. Was it because I didn't know or because they didn't let me know. I think it's men. I do think it's malicious. Write that down.

"I have this strong feeling that if you're going to have children, you have a strong obligation to stay home. They're your doing. I don't believe in this going back to work after six weeks, because then why have them? Then it's your ego trip.

"Everyone in this neighbourhood talks about the boys as being 'all boy' when they behave like hyperactive little bastards. And the little girls, they just sit there

and never get dirty. Mine are different. They will be different. That's one thing I've done. I've helped my children to feel that it's all right to be different."

LEANNE: "I've learned a lot about children and about myself since I became a mother. About my tolerance level, for instance. I've learned to be more lenient, more understanding. That's the main thing — it's important for parents to show respect for kids right off. They should have choices. This applies in practically everything. I'm not going to dominate my son's life and I want him to realize he's a single unit within the family and has choices, too. I don't think you should ever look down on kids. They're talked down to, and that's the start of so many problems. I believe everybody's equal."

RITA: "I thought I was very smart, having my two eighteen months apart. It turned out to be a nightmare. I hadn't the faintest idea of what it was about. At first I was angry that no one had told me what it would be like. At the beginning, I felt totally isolated, no one to talk to, no way of relieving motherhood.

"One adult cannot raise small children like that. It's a shock to the nervous system. As they got older, a lot of the need was mine. I needed to be there for them. It's a mind-blowing thing to watch a small person developing, and you don't see it unless you're with them a lot of the time. I still think I should have had some degree in child development or a total immersion with children, perhaps with someone else's children though. I feel very strongly about this — knowing what to expect about a kid's needs. I've a knowledge of motherhood now, but I wish I hadn't made the mistakes on my kids. Maybe there should be sharing; maybe there should be more grandmothers around."

VOLUNTEERING

The hours the women spend in the home, in the care of their children are without doubt those they value the most. Some women more than others, though, need time out of the home. Some take time visiting friends, some go shopping, some involve themselves in their children's activities. Jeannine coaches the soft-ball team her daughter plays on, for example. Others do volunteer work in women's organizations, community or municipal affairs, or service or "helping" organizations.

Joyce Howarth and Susan Secord did a survey in 1974 of "The Female Volunteer"⁽⁹⁾ in their own province of Alberta — it was a volunteer project they undertook on their own. They attempted to discover who volunteers and why; and what type of economic factors come into play.

The "typical" volunteer in their sample was between 26 and 55 years of age, married with an average of three children, had some post-secondary school training, had a husband employed more often than not in a professional or managerial job, and worked between two and six hours per week in her volunteer capacity. It's a description that fits most of the women in these pages. But not all of them volunteer, and some do with more verve than others.

A disinclination to volunteer work may in part be due to a rising feeling among many women that they are doing work which they would otherwise be paid to do,

⁽⁹⁾Howarth, Joyce, and Secord, Susan. *The Female Volunteer*. A survey conducted in the province of Alberta. 1974.

if they were not homemakers. Howarth and Secord found that while the volunteers they sampled believed the work they do to be essential, 82.2 per cent felt that volunteers should at least be paid out-of-pocket expenses (such as for babysitting, parking, etc.) if they wished.

A majority felt that organizations should pay insurance to cover volunteer workers (65.8 per cent); that those injured in the course of volunteer work should be eligible for worker's compensation (61.8 per cent); and that a tax credit should be given for volunteer work (56.3 per cent).

Susan doesn't do any volunteer work, even though she acknowledges "...the tremendous need for it. But if you're on a volunteer thing, you still have to show up and perform. Still, there's something about being paid that gives a job more respectability."

Rita used to be very involved as a volunteer in school and municipal activities, but not any more. She says, "I began to resent being chairperson of a school committee and giving all that time, and making a contribution to the betterment of the school system, and doing the same thing a lot of people do for money."

Both Leanne and Amy, however, are very involved in volunteer activities. Interestingly enough, they are both younger women, under 30, with pre-school-age children. Is it because they haven't become disenchanted with volunteer work yet, or because they feel more committed to certain causes that they offer their time and talents? Leanne says it's simply because "I like doing things for people, with people. But I find that you do it for two or three years, and you're still doing

the same things. I like to keep trying new things." For Amy, her involvement with family planning organizations and consumer activities appears to stem from a genuine commitment to the principles these organizations represent. "We do sex counselling in the schools, and counselling with parents on how to talk to their children about sex." For her, it's an extension of the professionalism she feels parenthood requires. "It's mostly work I can do at home," she says, "but I am out at least one evening a week. Unfortunately, once your name gets around town as a volunteer, everyone calls and asks you to help out. Until recently, I just couldn't say no. If I were working full-time, I couldn't. I'd be obliged to give the rest of my time to my family, and maybe then there'd be nothing left for me. But as a specialist doing family planning, which I like to do, I can, and I do it for free."

LIBERATION AND ALL THE TOMORROWS

When asked point-blank if the women's liberation movement had had any effect on them, only Rita and Susan replied that it had. The others remarked, as Leanne did, that "it had made me more aware of women and how women feel that they're being put down at various levels." Perhaps it's the effect those words 'Women's Liberation' have on people that makes these women shy away from a conscious recognition of its relationship to their own lives. Later on, in conversation, the impact of this movement was manifest to some degree in all of them. Certainly, it's not the well-publicized "issues" that capture and hold the attention of the homemaker. The celebrated Supreme Court judgement of *Murdoch v. Murdoch* may have been well-read, and its implications digested, but without a consequent arousal to anger or act. As Eliza-

beth Janeway points out, very often the woman at home feels events such as these bear no relation to her life. They happen outside, away, to other people.

(The judgement in the Murdoch case found against Irene Murdoch's claim to a share in the farm business she and her husband had jointly worked for over 20 years, on the grounds that the duties she had performed were those expected of a housewife. Because the property had been held solely in her husband's name, and despite her contributions of both money and labour, she was denied a share. Only Supreme Court Chief Justice Bora Laskin offered a dissenting opinion.)

For Michèle and Pat and many, many other women like them, the ruling against Irene Murdoch was not a call to action as it was for their more impassioned sisters. "I've heard of it," they both replied. "It was rather shocking, and makes you quite interested," added Michèle. The impact of the case did not extend beyond a level of mild interest.

Jeannine, living on and working on a farm, might have been expected to be more moved. She said, "At the time, I wished I could find out more details. I can't imagine they could be married that long that he would turn his back on her. That was definitely unfair. For instance, the quarters (of land) he inherited from his dad, I wouldn't feel she ought to have any part of, but the rest. . .

"We didn't make any agreement between the two of us," she goes on to say, "that we were going to set things down. I just can't imagine my husband doing that. I can't imagine him dealing with his wife any differently than he did with a partner he once had

when the partnership ended. If he were going to be unfair, he would have been unfair before."

Questions of power and property certainly carry their weight in our culture, and for many homemakers they provide valuable causes worth fighting for. But if the women in these pages are representative of the 2.5- to 4.5-million Canadian homemakers, there are other more personal causes to devote one's energies to: situations which reflect the special status of the woman at home, her world at one remove from that of the goings-on of the labour force and the economy, but perhaps a truer one in humane terms.

For some, the reckoning turns on the question of dependence. In the sense that the woman at home derives her social and economic status from her husband, she may not always feel entirely at ease in the decision-making process of her family. Or she may have to come to terms with the fact that one day her children, so dependent on her during infancy and childhood, will make new lives of their own. It is into these deep pockets of her life that the effect of the women's liberation movement has filtered, imperceptibly for most, boldly for a few.

Thoughts of the future, whether disquieting or calming, make their mark on present perceptions. For some, the future is a question mark: Should I get a job or not? To some, it's an unknown to be faced with trepidation. Still, there are those who see no future for themselves; it's not theirs at all, but exists in the lives their daughters and sons will carve out. And there are those for whom the future is a catch-up period; it's the time they will use to get things done — all the things the interruptions of getting meals and nursing hurts

never allowed time for. For others, the future is a new beginning — the opportunity to master talents and pursue interests. For those like Susan, the future is all of these.

The idea of “my self” as a focus of concern now and in the future is more visible in some than in others, perhaps because the role of housewife and mother is perceived and internalized by the woman at home as one of doing for others first, for herself, second. When the homemaker talks about her self and her future — her feelings about her status, her role in society, her concepts of independence, her interests, and desires for self-fulfillment — it is often either obliquely or timidly. Because the rewards she receives for the work she does are at once both personal and intangible, the homemaker’s concept of herself follows the same vein.

LEANNE: “The two have to make the decisions together in a household. I don’t think I could say, you make all the decisions. My husband pays the bills. Nobody decided it; it just evolved. I’ve always felt I can do what I want. I’m confident in what I feel. I’ve formulated my ideas and that’s how I feel. In about five years, I hope to enroll in university full-time. I’d like to work with children with learning disabilities. But if I wanted to go out to work tomorrow, I’m sure my husband wouldn’t object. It’s my decision.

“The future? Our son, of course. But he isn’t our whole life. We still have our own selves. If we involved our whole lives around him, what would we do? I’ve seen it happen. I don’t want that to happen.”

RITA: “I need to be my own boss. I’ve found this an enormous advantage in being a homemaker.

“My sense of power comes from somewhere inside me now. It’s a very personal thing; I almost have to talk on a spiritual level. It’s a quiet place inside of one’s head from which one can function. I’ve spent a lot of time on that. A lot of it is having convictions you profoundly believe in and feeling that change is possible. Lots of things you can’t control, and you have to start to work on those you can. It took me a long time to say I’m good at something. Free space is one of my problems; I don’t get enough of it. When I was single, I had a lot more time to myself and I miss that. I plan to develop my professional side, my writing and poetry.”

MICHÈLE: “I look forward to where we’re going, rather than look back. I’ve passed this attitude on to the kids. Too often we overlook the influence the home has on children, and how they’ll go into the world. As a parent, you can influence their thinking right from the start. I don’t like a helpless female. I’ve seen a lot of this — afraid of living alone, afraid of driving downtown.

“I’m definitely not bored. I’ve got too many projects I always want to do, and I’m looking forward to when my youngest is in school full-time, so I can get out to libraries and research my genealogy and write a book. When you do a thorough genealogy, you do all the names, and all the women, too. Usually, they drop the women. I don’t believe in that; it could make a very thick book.”

PAT: “One day one of my boys had a choice between school and a seminar on women and the law. He did go to the seminar; only two boys from the whole school went. I said, did you enjoy it. He said, yes, I did. A lawyer was one of the guest speakers. He said, do you know, Mom, you don’t own the clothes you’re wearing.

"I don't really think so. I've always had my rights and never felt I needed to be liberated. Sometimes I feel I must be lazy. I could get a job. Then I think, no, they're running themselves into a rat race. What's that all about? I don't envy them. I suppose I'm fortunate in that way, my husband's always been able to make a living.

"There are times when I'd like to get out. I like to meet people, and I can't do that in the kitchen. I feel sometimes I don't get my share of sociability.

"It isn't a case of loneliness. You get into the children's little world, and you want some adult companionship, and in the evening, your husband's off to a meeting, and you want to go out, but you can't leave the kids, and even the neighbours aren't that close, and they're too tired from working all day to talk. I'm the oddball, even here, most of the neighbours go out to work.

"I do get quite a bit involved in community activities. There I have an outlet. I'm involved in guiding. I feel as if I've started something good, and I've branched out now. I've got a lot of pots boiling.

"It's just a passing feeling that no one appreciates you. Now that I'm getting older, I wonder.

"It's going to be an awful blow when it hits — getting old — we have no thoughts of having a lonely retirement. I'd like to have some time on my hands. There's knitting and crocheting and so many things. I like to upholster too, and have an attic full of stuff I'm going to do when I've got the time.

"I really think probably a large family is the reason for my not being scared of the future. Maybe if I wasn't so

busy. No, it'll never happen, if it does, I can always wax my floor. People with nothing to do always have aches and pains. I don't think I'll ever have that problem."

JEANNINE: "My husband and I are definitely partners. But it depends on the husband and wife. I don't pin our hopes on the kids. I can think of lots of things I'm going to do when my kids are gone. I'm going to miss them, but there's lots in sheep promotion, for instance. I'm not worried about that.

"I'm sure I had an inferiority complex before I was married. I think the fact that as your marriage progresses and it's successful, you're pleased with the results, so possibly you know what you're doing. I'm quite happy. I am what I am and you like me as I am or the heck with ya."

AMY: "Five years ago I couldn't do an interview like this. I think that that's a reflection of my present life style. The contentment I have in my responsibility with a child and a home have given me a lot of confidence. I don't depend on my husband so much anymore.

"The term 'women's lib' aggravates me and I don't know why. Maybe part of the reason is that a lot of the publicity, most of it has been concerned with the business world. It seems to say, women's lib means you don't stay home and that's demeaning. There's a lot of liberating to do, not so much to get women out of the home and into the business world — most wives work and most work as clerks or typists or sales people — but to get the rest of the world to recognize what the homemaker does.

"My cousin, who's my age has a great job and travels a lot and goes from coast to coast in the course of a year.

We both can find things in each other's lives that we'd maybe missed. But you run into trouble if you try to live them. I think I'm the type of person who needs the stability of the type of man I married — that's obviously why I married him. Probably this is the right choice for me. Sure, there are some days when I wish I had a job and could travel to Hong Kong for a couple of weeks. But that's healthy, I think. You can't go round your whole life saying, what if.

"I think it's probably a little harder if you're a housewife. With a career, you probably get more reinforcement from outside sources. I couldn't stay home because my husband said to. I couldn't cope with a man who put restrictions on me. I don't have strong urges to support women's lib perhaps because of my husband's nature. We came here because my husband got a job and I didn't, and I began to feel very guilty that I was sponging off my husband. Nobody would hire me until the teaching job came through, and at that point we definitely didn't want to have a child because we weren't financially ready. Money really bothers me. I told my mother-in-law about it, and she said, his money is your money. My husband's attitude is, I earn X-amount of money and half of it is yours. The guilt — I don't mind spending for my son, but for myself it's different.

"We've thought about what we'll do when our child — or children, we'll decide that in the next few months — is grown. But circumstances can change and we can't make concrete decisions now. I would prefer not to go back to work. In fact, I would prefer never to work full-time again. Working full-time was a big drag because I never had enough time. Like next year, I'm planning to take a motor mechanics course and learn to crochet. And I'm not prepared to give up doing things I

want to do. If I went back to work, it'd be part-time, and I'd prefer not to go back as a classroom teacher, but as a specialist, or doing family planning."

SUSAN: "I have absolutely no confidence in myself. Like when I found out I could be alone, I was scared. I've never been my own person. It's really sad to be 35, and just to be becoming a person in your own right. Most women have worked. I'm about the only woman who's never worked. I have never worked!

"I see the next five years with terror — absolute terror. I have one enormous problem. I have nothing to do. I have no talent, I have no training. The other night we were having a discussion about the kids growing up and what was I going to do. That's what scared me: If I had to go out and earn money, I wouldn't know what to do. I have this thing that if I work for money, it's a much bigger responsibility than I could handle. Personally, I feel with my husband's salary, I should not have to go out and earn a living. Maybe I don't want responsibility, but where do you have more responsibility than home with three kids. You see, I know I'm really good at having children. But I can't do that the rest of my life. It's fear of the unknown, I guess.

"It's women's lib that's made the impact, but within my own frame of reference. In recent years, it's the first time I've been able to say to myself, well, why the hell should a woman stay home if she doesn't want to.

"It's really hard to talk about decision-making because it's all tied up with my concept of myself. My husband tries to consult me each time he has to make a decision that affects me. In most cases, I say, it's your decision, because mostly, I don't want to take the responsibility

for the decision. If it came to a major decision, we decide together. If he has a new job or fantastic job offer, then it's his decision. I would move again. We have enough of a give and take in our relationship, and if I didn't want to do it, we probably wouldn't. He wouldn't force me to do anything.

"He says I have tremendous influence over him, but I can't see it. I obviously do exert power, but I don't know how. I'm sure it's tied up with my dependence, but it's kind of underhanded. As far as I'm concerned, I have never kept a cheque book in balance, I have never paid a bill. If I were to call for a job, I wouldn't know what to say.

"I'm totally dependent on him. It's an economic thing that's a hang-up. I have no idea about insurance, taxes, bills, budgeting. But I can pick up a prescription at the drug store and know if it's the wrong one or the wrong dosage.

"For myself, I have to learn to give up my kids and let them go, which is not an easy thing to do, to learn that they're not going to be dependent on me. You see, I need them to be dependent on me like I need someone to depend on. I feel fulfilled by what I'm doing, but my time at home is coming to an end, and I have no feeling about going into the labour force. I never intended to go into the labour force. I can do crafts, macramé.

"My husband is afraid I'll put everything off, and then my kids will be grown up and I'll have nothing. He's trying to be kind and open up options for me. I never found the me — it's coming now.

"I would not be disappointed — no, that's not true! I would be — if my daughters chose to be *just* a mother

and housewife. I would be unhappy if they had nothing else."

POSTSCRIPT

The world of the homemaker is small and compact, operating on a personal scale in harmony with the natural processes of growth. It is a world separate and apart from, yet not untouched or unaffected by, the economic world where bigger is almost always assumed to be better. Although there are, in number, more full-time homemakers than any other occupational group in the country, the homemaker tends to be isolated. She does not see herself as "belonging" except within the environs of home, family, and surroundings.

As such, the homemaker forms no visible group, no power sector, no voice — as a part of the larger society. Each of the women interviewed here is distinct as an individual; yet together they form no collective unity or identity by virtue of their common role as homemaker. What power they potentially have is still for the most part unrecognized and untapped. Certainly, a few have begun tentatively voicing the idea that the work they do has value and deserves recognition. Ironically, however, the force behind much of whatever pressure for social recognition exists has not come from the homemaker herself, so much as from women who play dual roles as both homemaker *and* member of the labour force or highly visible volunteer.

At present, legislators are just beginning to perceive that some form of societal recognition is in order which could integrate the homemaker more fully into the structural make-up of our society. What form this should or could take is still undefined and undecided.

The matter of financial recognition is important for some homemakers, to be sure, but for many the whole question of recognition and reward appears to hinge on other less tangible concerns. These centre on the concept of worth: there is accumulating evidence that the homemaker feels threatened in her role, and senses a decline of respect for her worth brought about by the recent emphasis on women's role in the labour force.

Yet, not so long ago, her position was unchallenged; her role, unquestioned, encouraged and even honoured. Without judging the implications of this for women's development in other spheres, in the past, the woman who stayed out of the labour force, unfailingly supported her husband through "richer or poorer", and lovingly bore and reared the children, was accepted as the norm. This situation offered the homemaker a strong sense of security and value. This sense is now being eroded, and to add to their confusion, has not yet been replaced by anything of equal or higher value, leaving for many a void in their self-image and self-confidence. Thus, some believe the void could and should be replaced by money — a salary for homemakers, for instance. Others, however, feel that replacing the intangible qualities of confidence and worth with dollars just wouldn't work.

This lack of consensus probably means formal or legislative action by various levels of government is still a long way off. Perhaps government action is not what's required at all. Or perhaps that action should take the form of a national discussion of the quality of life, or, as in Australia, a Royal Commission enquiring into human relationships, believed to be the first enquiry of its kind in the world. Such a national deliberation could be conducted with a view to sharing and enlarging all

our frames of reference, and re-evaluating our system of rewards from purely economic ones to more compassionate ones; and centred on shared or expanded roles, for just as the homemaker's role of wife and mother isolates her from the mainstream of society, so too, those caught up in that mainstream are isolated from the slower-paced, more personal world of home and family. It has already been noted that the homemaker's world operates within a frame of reference different from others in our society.

Right now, many homemakers feel they are the ones who are out of step, out of tune with the strong forces of social change current in our society. Accepting their traditional role as keeper of the home essentially implies acceptance of "things as they are". However, coupled with that acceptance is the dichotomy created in their own minds of feeling a lack of personal recognition and seeing other women reaping different, financial or fulfilling, rewards in the labour force.

This duality calls for resolution, but resolving it should not be the sole responsibility of the homemaker who already copes with varying degrees of alienation. What's more, in the final analysis, it raises a much larger question about the nature of rewards and sacrifices in our society, a question we should be seeking answers to together — as parents, as wives and husbands, as women and men.

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THE PROFESSIONAL
WORKING WOMAN

DIAN COHEN



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The professional working woman in Canada in 1975 is at a turning point, much as the Canadian economy is. In general, it appears that professional occupations, which have been growing faster than the labour force, will continue to do so. Thus, it seems likely that job opportunities for professional women should grow, too.

However, the state of the general economy may be of considerable importance to the future of women in the professions. It is widely acknowledged that the Canadian unemployment rate, now at 7 per cent of the labour force, will remain abnormally high throughout the 1970s. The deeply rooted prejudiced beliefs against working women may become more pronounced, the higher the general level of unemployment.

It is becoming increasingly clear that even if the laws and policies which discriminate against women are legislated away, there will still be a struggle for equality in the labour force. Society's attitudes toward women's advancement in the professions seem to be a far more potent force with which to contend than the elimination of discriminatory legislation and policy decisions.

Jane Prather, in "Why Can't Women Be More Like Men,"⁽¹⁾ described these attitudes in the following way.

Very often, employers who do not hire women for responsible and powerful positions give as their reason for not doing so, the "fact" that women are inherently incapable of managing such positions. The employer then argues that he does not discriminate against women. On the contrary, he would be willing to hire

them if they had the same abilities as men. As long as the employer believes that women do not have or cannot acquire the attributes he seeks, he feels justified in limiting his job applicants to men.

A woman engaged in this kind of argument is put into a double bind. If she wishes success, and emulates the masculine characteristics deemed essential for the job, she is then called "unfeminine," "aggressive," or other adjectives considered derogatory to women. If she doesn't demonstrate these so-called "masculine characteristics," she may be considered inadequate for the job. This double bind creates considerable difficulty for women trying to "make it" to the top echelons of business and the professions.

The barriers preventing women from succeeding persist, despite the fact that women have tended over the past two decades to spread out among a wider range of occupation groups. Progress *has* been made in the sense that women have become more widely established in professions (such as accounting and dentistry), which have traditionally been considered masculine. Progress has also been made in the sense that women are *less* concentrated in the few occupations (like nursing and library science) which have traditionally been considered feminine. However, very little progress has been made in increasing the proportion of women working in the professions generally. In 1901, 15 per cent of the total number of working women were classified as working in professional occupations. In 1961, this percentage had risen to 16. In 1971, the comparable percentage was still 16 per cent. This means that for most of this century, women in the professional category have barely held their own in relation to the tremendous growth of the female labour

⁽¹⁾ American Behavioral Scientist, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 172-82.

force. This is true despite the fact that more women are becoming better educated.

The balance of this paper is divided into five sections. Section 1 provides some general background on women in the labour force.

Section 2 deals with the occupations in which professional women are now engaged.

Section 3 tries to trace the changes in these occupations which have occurred with the passage of time, particularly in the last two or two and a half decades.

Section 4 attempts to answer the question of whether there is sex discrimination in the professions.

Section 5 deals with the question of which occupations professional women are likely to be employed in in the future.

Before we begin, we must make the usual caveats about the statistics.

Statistics relating to the professional female work force are, unfortunately but typically, not as current as we would like to have them.

General information which provides insights into the changing composition of the total labour force, as well as the total female labour force, is available for 1973.

The statistics used to present a picture of the segment of the female labour force categorized as "professional" are classified primarily according to the system prepared for the 1971 decennial population census.⁽²⁾

For each census, a new occupational classification is prepared. Since new jobs continually appear, while older ones disappear or are radically altered, adjustments have to be made in the classifications each time.

Between 1951 and 1961, alterations in the classifications were relatively modest and sufficient time has elapsed for Statistics Canada to publish data which is comparable between the two census years.

However, the 1971 occupational classification differs radically from previous ones. Consequently, comparisons with earlier censuses are impossible to make on the basis of published information. The Census Bureau is working on a trend report which will provide comparable data, but this report will not be available in 1975.

We have been fortunate in that the Census Bureau has provided us with sufficient information to compare a great many occupational classifications with previous censuses, although not all of them.⁽³⁾

Two things must be kept in mind concerning occupations: First, the classification, although official, is basically arbitrary. Second, there are problems in attempting to make historical comparisons.

⁽²⁾ There is no technical definition of what constitutes "professional" in the 1971 decennial population census. However, the official classification groups 1111 through 3379, with specific exclusions, are clearly identifiable as occupations which are customarily, although arbitrarily agreed upon as being "professional" occupations. The complete professional classification list is attached in the appendix.

⁽³⁾ Special thanks to Gail Graser, Rick Clynic and Gilles Montigny, Labour Sector, Economics Group, Census Characteristics Division, Census Bureau, Statistics Canada, Ottawa.

1: GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE

In 1973, there were 3,152,000 women in the Canadian work force. This represented an increase over the ten years since 1963 of 68.6 per cent in the female work force, although the female population had grown by less than 30 per cent. In other words, not only were more women in the work force in 1973 than had been ten years earlier, but a greater proportion of the female population was participating in the work force. In 1963, one out of every four workers in Canada was

a woman. In 1973, one out of every three was female. Similarly in 1963, just under 30 per cent of all women who could have been in the labour force were. By 1973, this participation rate had increased to almost 40 per cent (see Table 1).

UNEMPLOYMENT

While more women have gone into the work force in the past ten years, a larger percentage of women have found themselves unemployed. For example, in 1963, 16.6 per cent of the unemployed labour force was female. By 1973, this number had almost doubled to 30.8 per cent.

TABLE 1
Population^a and Labour Force^a Growth, 1963 and 1973

	POPULATION				LABOUR FORCE				PARTICIPATION RATE ^b	
	1963		1973		1963		1973		1963	1973
	('000)	%	('000)	%	('000)	%	('000)	%	(per cent)	
WOMEN	6,320	50.4	8,146	50.5	1,870	27.7	3,152	34.0	29.6	38.7
MEN	6,215	49.6	7,978	49.5	4,879	72.3	6,127	66.0	78.5	76.8
TOTAL	12,536	100.0	16,125	100.0	6,748	100.0	9,279	100.0	53.8	57.5

^a *Population* refers to persons 14 years of age and over, exclusive of inmates of institutions, members of the armed forces, Indians living on reserves and residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Labour Force is that portion of the civilian, non-institutional population 14 years of age and over who, at the time of the survey, were employed or unemployed. Persons not counted as in the labour force include those in the civilian, non-institutional population 14 years of age and over who were going to school, keeping house, too old or otherwise unable to work, and voluntarily idle or retired.

^b The *participation rate* is that percentage of the population (aged 14 and over, as defined in note^a above) who are in the labour force. For example, the "participation rate" for married women is that percentage of all married women in the population who are in the labour force.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Division, Labour Force Survey Section, Special Tables.

In 1963 and 1973 the average unemployment rate was nearly the same — 5.5 per cent and 5.6 per cent respectively. The increase in the proportion of female unemployment suggests that women were bearing more of the overall burden of unemployment than they previously had (see Table 2).

TABLE 2
Unemployment in Canada, 1963 and 1973

	NUMBER OF UN- EMPLOYED	PERCENT- AGE UN- EMPLOYED	RATE OF UNEM- PLOYED ^a BY SEX
	'000	% 1963	%
WOMEN	62	16.6	3.3
MEN	312	83.4	6.4
TOTAL	374	100.0	5.5
		1973	
WOMEN	160	30.8	5.2
MEN	360	69.2	5.9
TOTAL	520	100.0	5.6

^a The number of unemployed persons by sex as a percentage of the labour force by sex (as shown in Table 1).

Source: Same as for Table 1.

PARTICIPATION RATES

During the decade to 1973, women who lived in the Atlantic provinces increased their participation in the labour force far more than women in any other geographic area. There was a 45 per cent increase in participation rates in the Atlantic region between 1963 and 1973, compared with a 31 per cent increase in all of Canada, and a 28 per cent increase in Ontario (see Table 3).

TABLE 3
**Women in the Labour Force and Their
Participation Rates,^a by Region, Canada,
1963 and 1973**

REGION	FEMALE LABOUR FORCE		PARTICI- PATION RATE		% INCR. IN PART. RATE 1963/1973
	1963	1973	1963	1973	%
	'000		%		
ATLANTIC	143	241	22.9	33.3	45.4
QUEBEC	510	841	27.8	36.6	31.6
B.C.	173	333	29.9	38.7	29.4
PRAIRIES	319	499	30.2	38.7	28.1
ONTARIO	724	1,238	32.5	41.6	28.0
CANADA	1,870	3,152	29.6	38.7	30.7

^a See definition, Table 1.

Source: 1963: Data from Statistics Canada.

1973: Calculated from Statistics Canada, The Labour Force, special tables, mimeo.

In terms of age, the greatest increase in female participation rates in the past decade has been in the age group between 25 and 34 (53.7 per cent increase), with women between 35 and 44 years of age showing the second greatest increase (38.3 per cent). (See Table 4.)

While many factors contribute to a woman's decision to enter the labour force, several specific factors may account for the increased participation rates exhibited by women in Québec and the Atlantic provinces, and by women in the 25- to 44-year age groups.

TABLE 4
Women in the Labour Force and Their
Participation Rates,^a by Age Group, Canada,
1963 and 1973

Age Group	FEMALE LABOUR FORCE		PARTICI- PATION RATE		% INCREASE 1963-73
	1963	1973	1963	1973	
	'000		%		%
14-19	286	444	29.9	34.2	14.4
20-24	314	614	50.3	62.5	24.2
25-34	348	705	29.4	45.2	53.7
35-44	386	546	31.6	43.7	38.3
45-54	331	519	34.6	42.9	24.0
55-64	163	283	24.6	31.0	26.0
65 and over	42	41	5.9	4.4	-25.4
All Ages	1,870	3,152	29.6	38.7	30.7

^a See definition, Table 1.

Source: Same as for Table 1.

First, the impact of the cultural revolution (women's lib, the advent of the "pill," and so on) could be expected to be very strong in least developed parts of the country.

Second, the federal funds distributed to these specific geographic areas through federal departments, such as the Department for Regional Economic Expansion, have been used to create new jobs, many of which could be filled by women.

Third, it is feasible that in these recent years of relatively high inflation and male unemployment, more women have joined the labour force either to supplement the major income earner's income, or to provide a replacement for it. During the last recession of 1969-70, there was evidence that many women joined the labour force when their husbands became unemployed. While statistics are spotty, there is also some evidence that more women are going to work in order to maintain or improve the family's living standards in the face of inflation.

REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR FORCE

There are fewer women today who believe that keeping house effectively prevents their participation in the labour force.

In 1963, 82.5 per cent of women who were not in the work force gave as their reason the fact that they were keeping house. In 1973, only 78.2 per cent gave "keeping house" as their reason for not participating in the work force.

By the same token, a greater percentage of women not in the work force gave as *their* reason the fact that they

were still going to school. In 1963, 11.2 per cent of non-participating women were in school; in 1973, 14.6 per cent were (see Table 5). This represents an increase in this female response of 30 per cent, compared with only about a 3 per cent increase in the male response. In other words, a far greater percentage of women in 1973 are continuing their education than did so a decade earlier.

Despite these encouraging signs, women still tend to fall into stereotyped roles in the work force.

TABLE 5
Percentage Distribution of Persons Aged 14
and Over Who Are Not in the Labour Force,
by Reason for Non-Participation, for Women and
Men, Canada, 1963 and 1973

	WOMEN		MEN	
Reason for Non-Participation	1963	1973	1963	1973
Permanently unable or too old to work	1.1	1.2	8.5	9.9
Keeping house	82.5	78.2	*	*
Going to School	11.2	14.6	42.0	43.1
Retired or voluntarily idle	5.1	5.9	48.5	46.1
Other	*	*	*	*
Total: Percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(Number in Thousands)	(4,451)	(4,995)	(1,337)	(1,851)

*No percentage calculated because figures less than 10,000 and thus too small to be reliable.

Source: Same as for Table 1.

In 1971, there were almost 3 million female workers in Canada. Two thirds of these, that is, over two million women, were to be found in just four major occupational groups: clerical, sales, service and professional. The clerical category contained by far the largest number of women, almost one million, while there were approximately 450,000 in both the service and professional occupations, and 250,000 in sales.

Not only are women concentrated in a few major occupation groups, but within these categories they tend to be located in a small number of occupation classes. There were close to 450,000 women stenographers, typists and receptionists, representing 45 per cent of the clerical group.

Cooks, waitresses and hairdressers made up 60 per cent of the women in the service category. Virtually nothing about this pattern has changed in the past ten years.⁽⁴⁾

2: IN WHICH OCCUPATIONS ARE PROFESSIONAL WOMEN CURRENTLY EMPLOYED?

There are three ways to answer this question. First, we can simply describe the occupational groups in which the female professional labour force is found, in order to discover the degree to which women are integrated into all professional occupations.

Second, we can compare the occupations in which women work with the occupations in which men work.

⁽⁴⁾See Noah M. Meltz, "The Female Worker: Occupational Trends in Canada," in *Changing Patterns in Women's Employment*, Women's Bureau, Canada Department of Labour, 1966.

This will tell us whether any significant differences exist.

Third, we can examine the number of women working in specific jobs as a proportion of the total number of people (male and female) holding those jobs. This will indicate whether women are represented in specific occupations in the same proportions as they are represented in the labour force as a whole.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE FEMALE PROFESSIONAL LABOUR FORCE, BY OCCUPATION

In 1971, there were more than 450,000 professional women in the labour force (458,685). This represented more than two-fifths of the total category.⁽⁵⁾ Sixty per cent of these, that is, more than a quarter of a million women, were to be found in just three major professional groups: school teachers and instructors, graduate nurses, and nurses-in-training. A further 10 per cent were employed as accountants, laboratory technicians and managers and administrators.

The following is a list, in order of magnitude, of the largest professional occupations included in Occupations Bulletin of the 1971 Census (see Table 6). These

twenty-eight occupations contained 80 per cent of the female professional labour force in 1971.

COMPARISON WITH THE PROFESSIONAL MALE LABOUR FORCE

While 60 per cent of all female professional workers were in teaching and nursing professions, only two per cent of all males were in these groups.

In addition, the four professional occupations which contained the largest number of males (accounting, management, engineering and teaching) made up only 41 per cent of the male labour force, compared with 66 per cent for the four largest female professional occupations (teaching, nursing, lab technicians, and accounting).

Women tend to be much more concentrated in occupational terms than men. This kind of concentration is typically referred to as the job ghetto.

PROPORTION OF FEMALES IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP

In 1971, women made up 34 per cent of the labour force. This did not hold true for individual occupations. Women tended to either dominate an occupation, that is, to outnumber men, or to make up only a fraction of the total. It seems very much to be a case of all or nothing. By definition, the reverse would be true for males.

Women dominated men in five major professional occupational groups: brothers and nuns; dieticians; nurses, both graduate and in-training; and librarians.

They outnumbered men in two other groups — social workers and school teachers.

⁽⁵⁾ The improvement in women's position in the professions is more likely understated than the reverse. Because of the difficulties in finding equivalent classifications between 1971 and preceding census years, we were compelled to leave out certain professional occupations which may be important. For example, artists and art teachers, musicians and music teachers and religious workers, in which many women worked according to previous censuses, are eliminated from the classifications of this study. Note, too, that the 1971 selected classification captures only 80 per cent of the female professional labour force, (see Table 6); whereas the equivalent 1961 and 1951 classifications capture 90 per cent. This is partly because women are more readily found in more occupations than previously.

There were fewer than 300 women in seven of the largest 28 professional female groups and fewer than one thousand in twelve of them. Women represent less than 20 per cent of the work force in 17 of the top 28 female professional groups (see Table 6).

TABLE 6
Women in the Professions
Selected Occupations, 1971

Professional Occupation	Number	Per. of Prof. Fem. Lab. Force ^a	Cumul. Per.	Fem. As Per. of Prof. Lab. Force ^b
1. School teachers (including instructors)	176,105	38.4	38.4	65.2
2. Nurses, graduate	90,850	19.8	58.2	95.8
3. Lab. technicians	19,365	4.2	62.4	43.7
4. Accountants & auditors	15,655	3.4	65.8	15.2
5. Managers & administrators	13,360	2.9	68.7	12.4
6. Nurses, in training	9,430	2.1	70.8	95.9
7. Professors & col- lege principals	9,865	2.1	72.9	18.9
8. Social workers	6,325	1.4	74.3	53.4
9. Librarians	5,515	1.1	75.4	76.3
10. Authors, editors, journalists	4,610	1.0	76.4	31.2
11. Physicians & surgeons	2,890	.6	77.0	10.0

12. Draftsmen	2,045	.4	77.4	7.5
13. Brothers and nuns	1,800	.4	77.8	91.1
14. Dieticians	1,705	.4	78.2	95.2
15. Commercial artists	1,610	.4	78.6	19.4
16. Engineers	1,220	.3	78.9	1.6
17. Chemists	795	.2	79.1	11.1
18. Lawyers and notaries	780	.2	79.3	4.8
19. Actuaries & statisticians	775	.2	79.5	21.2
20. Clergymen	700	.2	79.7	3.8
21. Photographers	560	.1	79.8	10.2
22. Dentists	310	.07	79.8	4.8
23. Agricultural professionals	260	.06	79.9	4.3
24. Surveyors	170	.04	79.9	1.7
25. Architects	115	.02	80.0	2.8
26. Osteopaths & chiropractors	80	.02	80.0	7.4
27. Veterinarians	75	.02	80.0	4.4
28. Judges & magistrates	70	.02	80.0	5.5

^a Professional women in each category as a per cent of the professional female labour force in Canada.

^b Professional women in each category as a per cent of the total number of professionals (male and female) in that category.

Source: Calculated from Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, Occupations by Sex, 1971.

To sum up the answer to the first question, "In Which Occupations Are Professional Women Currently Engaged?" we can say that professional women are concentrated in nursing and in teaching. Furthermore, women tend to be located in a few specific occupations where they outnumber men. In Section 4 we will consider whether this concentration is a voluntary choice or whether women are forced into these occupations through discrimination.

3: WHAT CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED OVER TIME IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE FEMALE LABOUR FORCE BY PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATION?

In a 1966 study of the female occupational trend, Noah Meltz⁽⁶⁾ made two general observations about the behaviour of the female labour force since 1901.

1. "Women have tended to spread out among a wider range of occupation groups. Although women were concentrated in a few major groups in 1961, the degree of concentration was even greater in 1901 . . ."
2. "The order of importance of occupation groups has changed considerably since the turn of the century. This is the most interesting development . . ."

These observations still apply. However, as we noted earlier, the quite impressive strides women have made into new or traditionally male occupations is somewhat offset by the fact that the proportion of professional women within the female labour force has re-

mained virtually the same since 1901. Despite the startling growth of the female labour force since the turn of the century, professional women represent 16 per cent of the total, just as they did so many decades ago. This suggests that job "ghettoization" is as strong today as it ever was, and that the tremendous numbers of new jobs which have been created have by no means been all in the professional sector, despite the fact that more women are becoming better educated.

In terms of concentration, in 1971, as in previous years, men tend to be more widely distributed among occupational groups.

In seven of the eight major occupational groups (excluding nuns) in which women dominate or outnumber men, the degree of concentration since 1951 has diminished. In only one, laboratory technicians, has the proportion of women increased.⁽⁷⁾

The proportion of women in these eight groups declined significantly since 1951. In 1951, women represented 80 per cent of the people employed within these professions. By 1971, they represented only 67 per cent.

The reduction in the degree of concentration can be expressed another way. In 1951, four out of every five nurses or teachers were women. By 1971, fewer than three out of four nurses or teachers were female.

⁽⁷⁾ This particular category has been reclassified in each of the three census years. Although great effort was made to ensure that the classifications are comparable, the numbers don't follow any pattern, and consequently cause some unease in interpreting them. Although Statistics Canada personnel has agreed with the author's method of making the classifications comparable, it would be wise not to put too much weight on this particular statistic, until Statistics Canada itself publishes comparable tables.

⁽⁶⁾ Noah M. Meltz, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

WOMEN AS A PERCENTAGE OF EACH OCCUPATION

DIETICIANS	LIBRARIANS
1951 — 99.9%	1951 — 86.7%
1961 — 96.6%	1961 — 81.7%
1971 — 95.2%	1971 — 76.3%
SOCIAL WORKERS	GRADUATE NURSES
1951 — 63.2%	1951 — 97.5%
1961 — 53.3%	1961 — 96.2%
1971 — 53.4%	1971 — 95.8%
LAB. TECHNICIANS	NURSES-IN-TRAINING
1951 — 38.1%	1951 — 99.7%
1961 — 24.3%	1961 — 98.6%
1971 — 43.7%	1971 — 95.9%
SCHOOL TEACHERS	TEACHERS & INSTRUCTORS ⁽⁸⁾
1951 — 72.4%	1951 — 58.1%
1961 — 70.7%	1961 — 48.0%
1971 — 66.0%	1971 — 45.8%

Source: Calculated from Statistics Canada, Census 1951, 1961 and 1971

Obviously, if women were less concentrated in the few major occupations which have traditionally been feminine, they must have become more widely established in professions that used to be mainly men's, or they have entered entirely new fields.

The following chart illustrates the professions in which

⁽⁸⁾ Teachers include elementary and secondary school teachers and related occupations. Instructors include vocational school, trade school and business college instructors, as well as specialists, such as art and dancing teachers, music and dramatic art instructors.

female representation has increased in the past twenty years.

ACCOUNTANTS & AUDITORS	ACTUARIES & STATISTICIANS
1951 — 4.7%	1951 — 14.5%
1961 — 5.0%	1961 — 14.7%
1971 — 15.2%	1971 — 21.2%
CHEMISTS	AGRICULTURAL PROFESSIONALS
1951 — 10.2%	1951 — 3.8%
1961 — 7.2%	1961 — 2.4%
1971 — 11.1%	1971 — 4.3%
CLERGYMEN (sic)	PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS
1951 — 10.2%	1951 — 4.6%
1961 — 7.2%	1961 — 6.8%
1971 — 11.1%	1971 — 10.1%
AUTHORS, EDITORS, JOURNALISTS	DENTISTS
1951 — 22.5%	1951 — 1.5%
1961 — 25.4%	1961 — 4.3%
1971 — 31.2%	1971 — 4.8%
DRAFTSMEN	JUDGES & MAGISTRATES
1951 — 4.9%	1951 — .8%
1961 — 4.2%	1961 — 2.0%
1971 — 7.5%	1971 — 5.5%
LAWYERS & NOTARIES	COLLEGE PROFESSORS & PRINCIPALS
1951 — 2.2%	1951 — 15.0%
1961 — 2.6%	1961 — 21.2%
1971 — 4.8%	1971 — 18.9%

SURVEYORS	VETERINARIANS
1951 — .5%	1951 — 2.2%
1961 — .7%	1961 — 1.7%
1971 — 1.7%	1971 — 4.4%
ARCHITECTS	ENGINEERS
1951 — 2.5%	1951 — .1%
1961 — 2.2%	1961 — .3%
1971 — 2.8%	1971 — 1.6%

The order of importance of major groups has changed during the twenty years since 1951. Table 7 shows this change, by order of magnitude of professional occupations.

It is particularly relevant that in 1951, almost 90 per cent of all women professionals were concentrated in only seven major groups. Ten groups had to be included to capture 90 per cent of all female professionals in 1961. But in 1971, although seventeen occupations were included, only 77 per cent of all professional women were accounted for.

In summary, from historical trends we can say that although the number of women who were in professional occupations increased greatly, the percentage of women in these groups remained virtually unchanged, not just since 1951, but really since the turn of the century.

Second, there has been some progress made in establishing women in professions which have been traditionally thought to be male preserves. There is no question that women are diversifying in the professional occupations, and this trend should by no means be minimized.

4: IS THERE SEX DISCRIMINATION IN THE PROFESSIONS?

The answer, very simply, is "yes". Women are discriminated against in the areas of salaries, retirement schemes, life insurance, and long-term disability plans.

Despite the proliferation of "fair employment" and "equal opportunity" legislation, sex discrimination persists in the measurable areas just mentioned, as well as in more subjective areas of hiring policies and promotions. The real question is not "Is there sex discrimination in the professions?" but "Why does it exist?" Until we can understand the societal attitudes of both men and women, there is little chance that real or lasting change will occur.

These social attitudes will be discussed in the next section, which deals with the future status of working women. The remainder of this section will outline the areas and extent of sex discrimination.

Sylvia Gelber⁽⁹⁾ once began a speech on sex discrimination this way: "The average employment earnings of full-time, full-year male babysitters were more than twice (127.5 per cent) those of female babysitters during 1970. In a world where we have become accustomed to looking on certain kinds of occupations as male and female, this interesting fact appears to be somewhat ironic."⁽¹⁰⁾

⁽⁹⁾ Sylvia M. Gelber, Director, Women's Bureau, Canada Department of Labour.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Sylvia M. Gelber, in a panel discussion to the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, University of Toronto, August, 1974.

TABLE 7
Women As a Proportion of Female Professional Labour Force, Selected Professions, 1951, 1961, and 1971

PROFESSION	PER CENT OF FEMALE PROFESSIONALS	PROFESSION	PER CENT OF FEMALE PROFESSIONALS	PROFESSION	PER CENT OF FEMALE PROFESSIONALS
1951		1961		1971	
1. Teachers & Instructors	45.5	1. Teachers & Instructors	45.5	1. Teachers & Instructors	38.4
2. Nurses	29.9	2. Nurses	30.1	2. Nurses	21.9
3. Nuns	6.3	3. Lab. Technicians	4.8	3. Lab. technicians	4.2
4. Lab. technicians	3.3	4. Nuns	2.7	4. Accountants & auditors	3.4
5. Social workers	1.5	5. Social workers	2.1	5. College professors	
6. Librarians	1.1	6. Authors, editors, journalists	1.2	and principals	2.1
7. Authors, editors, journalists	1.0	7. Librarians	1.0	6. Social workers	1.4
		8. College professors and		7. Librarians	1.1
		principals	.9	8. Authors, editors, journalists	1.0
		9. Dieticians	.7	9. Physicians & surgeons	.6
		10. Accountants & auditors	.6	10. Nuns	.6
				11. Dieticians	.4
				12. Commercial artists	.4
				13. Draftsmen	.4
				14. Engineers	.3
				15. Lawyers & notaries	.2
				16. Actuaries & statisticians	.2
				17. Chemists	.2
Source: Calculated from Statistics Canada Census 1951, 1961, 1971					
Proportion of female professionals in these 7 occupations — 88.6%		Proportion of female professionals in these 10 occupations — 89.6%		Proportion of female professionals in these 17 occupations — 76.8%	

Gelber went on to point out that babysitting is not the only occupation which is traditionally thought of as "feminine" in which male workers show higher average earnings in the same occupation.

Among the professions, for example, that of librarian is generally viewed as a female profession; yet, the

average employment earnings of male librarians exceed those of females by almost one-fifth (18.6 per cent). (See Table 8). Similarly, the professions of dieticians and nutritionists are generally looked upon as female; yet male workers in these professions derive average employment earnings almost one-quarter (22.6 per cent) more than the female workers. Another example

TABLE 8
Average Annual Earnings of Men and Women
Selected Occupations, 1970-71

			MEN/ WOMEN ^a AS PER- CENTAGE
OCCUPATION	WOMEN	MEN	
	\$	\$	%
Managerial	5,366	11,128	107.4
Science & engineering	10,575	19,215	82.0
Professional and technical	7,276	12,104	66.4
University administration	19,850	25,325	27.6
University teachers:			
Biological sciences	11,600	16,994	46.5
Community college teachers:			
Arts and science	10,850	11,709	7.9
Business	10,267	11,858	15.5
Librarians	7,353	8,717	18.6
Chemists	7,802	10,136	30.0
Architects	9,754	15,933	63.0
Civil engineers	9,942	12,786	29.0
Surveyors	5,923	8,047	36.0
Draftsmen	5,905	8,240	40.0
Social workers	7,733	8,533	10.0
Judges and magistrates	11,484	22,460	96.0
Lawyers and notaries	10,469	21,933	100.0
Mathematicians, statisticians and actuaries	7,320	11,556	58.0

^a The percentage difference in men's salaries over those of women.

Sources: Statistics Canada, *Women in the Labour Force*, 1973, Tables 29, 32, 34 and 36; 1971 Census.

of an occupation which at one time was looked upon as male, but in recent years has tended to become female, is that of tellers and cashiers; yet the average employment earnings of male workers in these occupations are one-half greater (50.9 per cent) than those of female workers.

If the male workers employed in so-called "female" occupations have average employment earnings exceeding those of the female workers in the same occupations, then it is not to be wondered that the average employment earnings of women in mixed occupations show an even greater percentage difference. Statistical data reflect a consistency throughout the labour force in similarly described occupations: women's average employment earnings are less than those of men.

The average employment earnings, of course, may be higher for men than for women for reasons other than for the reason of sex. They may be higher for men than for women for the simple reason that the men may work for fifty-two weeks during the year while the women may work for only forty weeks during the year. This 40- to 52-week period is the time span used to define full-time full-year employment in connection with the data referred to here, but the consistency of the percentage differences in earnings right across the board can hardly be accounted for on these grounds.

One might well ask why the average earnings of male actors, for example, should exceed by more than one half (57.5 per cent) the average employment earnings of actresses? Or why should the average employment earnings of waiters exceed by more than one-half (54.8

per cent) those of waitresses? Why should the average employment earnings of male hairdressers exceed those of female hairdressers by well over one-third (37.5 per cent)?

These are not isolated examples. Between 1963 and 1971, the gap between the dollar earnings of male and female university teachers actually widened.⁽¹¹⁾

The gap is especially apparent in such fields as the biological and the social sciences. It is particularly ironic that there should be a differential of more than one-third (36.5 per cent) in the median annual salaries of men and women having similar qualifications in the latter field.

The relationship of women to universities has, of course, fluctuated over the years since the days when women had no entry whatsoever to these institutions. There was a considerable influx of women to the universities not only to the undergraduate courses but also to the post-graduate courses, during the 1920s. Unhappily, this trend was reversed as a result of the depression years of the 1930s which were followed by years of war.

Despite this, more women are becoming better educated. In the last ten years, the number of women graduating from universities has quadrupled (up 310.5 per cent). During the same period, the number of male graduates also increased, of course. But the increase of men graduating was only two and one half times

(up 151.3 per cent) or half the rate of increase recorded by women.

Ten years ago women received just over one-quarter (27.4 per cent) of all BAs and first professional degrees awarded. Today, the percentage of these degrees awarded to women had risen to well over one-third (38.1 per cent) of the total. Two facts are associated with this trend. First, the differential in the percentage of men and women graduates has narrowed in the last ten years. Second, the narrowing process was not spread evenly across the broad range of faculties. Indeed, the pattern has revealed the extent to which deep-rooted social attitudes still play an unfortunate role in women's choice of specialization.

Discrimination in areas other than salaries also exists and is easily verified.

The author recently undertook to investigate some of the practices of the insurance industry. Basically, we shopped for disability insurance for a professional economist, age 37, which would pay \$1,000 a month at age 65 in case of sickness or accident. In one case, the professional economist was male; in the other, female. Here are the replies. (Elimination period means the length of time of disablement before the company starts paying.)

Crown Life: 30 day elimination period, sickness and accident to age 65. The man would pay an annual premium of \$412.80; the woman, \$623.60.

CNA Insurance: Would pay a maximum of \$400 a month to the woman, although \$1,000 a month to the man.

⁽¹¹⁾ Statistics Canada, Education Division, *Salaries and Qualifications of Teachers in Universities and Colleges 1970-71*, Catalogue No. 81-203 (Ottawa: Information Canada 1972) pp. 62-65

Manufacturers' Life: Would give maximum coverage of five years to the woman, although would cover the man to age 65.

Paul Revere: 30 day elimination period, sickness and accident to age 65. Male premium, \$442.60; female, \$642.80

Unionmutual Life: 30 day elimination period, sickness and accident to age 65. Male premium, \$440; female, \$658.00.

Occidental Life: 30 day elimination period, sickness and accident to age 65. Premium for the woman would be \$712.00; lifetime coverage for the man, \$514.00.

Other companies, such as Sun Life, would quote no longer than two years of sickness benefits.

Pregnancy is excluded as a cause of disability. In addition, at least two companies, Crown and Travelers, say if an insured female is not gainfully employed on a full-time basis away from her place of residence at the commencement of total disability, the monthly indemnity rate is automatically reduced by 50 per cent. In other words, a freelance male journalist could become disabled at home, but a woman had better get sick on an outside job. Most Canadian companies will not even consider for disability insurance women who work at home, although they will consider a man.

Life insurance discrimination is not as clearcut as disability insurance, but nevertheless exists. Women are considered a better insurance risk because they live an average of six to seven years longer than men. Thus a woman would pay a lower premium on her life insurance than a man of the same age.

However, many insurance companies base their female rates on a percentage discount off the male rate, which turns out to be far less than a six-year age difference. For example, a woman of thirty applying for life insurance will be charged four or five per cent less than a man of 30. Translated into age, she will be charged the same rate as a man of 28, not that of a man of 23 or 24.

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women released its Report in late 1970. The Report supplied statistics and examples supporting what everyone already knew: women are discriminated against. The Report provided 167 recommendations for action necessary to give women a "fair deal." By 1974, about half of the recommendations have been completely or partially implemented.

However, a number of societal myths about women must be eliminated before women will be able to share in managerial and professional occupations to the same extent that they participate in the labour force.

THE MYTHS ABOUT WOMEN

MYTH ONE: WOMEN AREN'T QUALIFIED

People who use this argument often say that women are not interested in business or the professions, or if interested, lack the aggressive nature required to be a successful "businessman" or professional in the competitive world of "dog-eat-dog."

The fact is that there is no occupation listed in the Census which does not employ some women. While a majority of the professional occupations is regarded as a special preserve of one sex or the other, the assign-

ment seems to be traditional rather than functional. For example, few women study engineering, but studies cited by Caroline Bird⁽¹²⁾ show that two-thirds as many girls as boys have an aptitude for this kind of work and can be trained for it when the demand warrants.

MYTH TWO: WOMEN AREN'T STEADY WORKERS

It is frequently stated that women do not work as long or as regularly as men due to illness and "female problems." Thus they are not worth the expensive training for promotion.

The facts are these:

There is an insignificant difference in the amount of time, or the number of men and women in the full-time labour force who are off work because of illness. In the latest survey⁽¹³⁾ women ill for a whole week represented 1.82 per cent of the work force. Men ill for a whole week represented 1.97 per cent. In the federal public service, which employs about 74,000 women and 170,000 men, the women averaged 4.41 days of certified sick leave per year (that means they had a doctor's certificate); men averaged 4.09 days. That means that women are off work because of illness about two-and-one-half hours more a year than men.

In addition, men suffer a far higher rate of many serious illnesses than women. Official hospital statistics show the frequency with which men and women have been hospitalized with specific diseases:

- Degenerative heart diseases: male patients exceed female by 54 per cent.

- Pneumonia: male patients exceed female by 28 per cent.

- Bronchitis: male patients exceed female by 42 per cent.

- Cirrhosis and other diseases of the liver: male patients exceed female by 52 per cent.

- Ulcer of stomach: male patients exceed female by 144 per cent.

- Disorders of behaviour: male patients exceed female by 141 per cent.

MYTH THREE: WOMEN DON'T NEED THE MONEY; THEREFORE, THEY WON'T TRY AS HARD AS MEN

The facts suggest that close to half of the three million women who work have to support themselves or others. More than a third are single. Another ten per cent are widowed, divorced or separated. According to a special study of married women in the Canadian labour force,⁽¹⁴⁾ "there is clear and convincing evidence that a married woman is less likely to be in the labour force the higher the level of family income available."

In other words, married women at the lower end of the income scale are *more* likely to be in the labour force.

⁽¹²⁾ Caroline Bird, *Women: Opportunity for Management*, The President's Association, Inc., 1973, p. 2.

⁽¹³⁾ Statistics Canada, Labour Division, Labour Force Survey, 1973.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Statistics Canada, (DBS) Special Labour Force Studies, Series B, No. 4. Married Female Labour Force Participation, Cat. No. 71-516.

U.S. statistics indicate that in addition to the single, widowed, or separated working woman, 15 per cent of all married women who work have husbands who are earning less than \$7,000 a year.

MYTH FOUR: WOMEN TAKE JOBS AWAY FROM MEN

In fact, very few women take jobs away from men. There was an average of 400,000 unemployed men in Canada in 1974, the vast majority of them not in the professions, especially not in the overwhelmingly female-dominated nursing and teaching professions. If professional women had stayed home, there would have been possibly 300,000 unfilled jobs, since qualified men would not have been available.

MYTH FIVE: MEN WILL NOT WORK FOR WOMEN SUPERVISORS. WOMEN WILL NOT WORK FOR WOMEN SUPERVISORS

A survey of Canadian Gallup Polls between 1953 and 1973⁽¹⁵⁾ shows extremely egalitarian attitudes toward female physicians, lawyers and political representatives compared to the reactions given to questions on gender preferences of bosses. In 1953 and 1964, nearly two-thirds of the Canadian Gallup Poll respondents indicated that they would prefer a male boss if they were taking a new job and had a choice of boss. This can be interpreted as an index of traditional sex-role ideology (see Section 5). A Gallup Poll taken in 1974 indicated that most respondents had never worked for a woman.

MYTH SIX: WOMEN AREN'T SUITED FOR BUSINESS

This is usually stated in terms of women being "too emotional" for objective decision making, or that they lack the stamina required to "clinch deals."

Psychological studies suggest that men and women are equally matched in "emotionality." But medical evidence suggests that women live longer, resist most diseases better, stand the stress of operations better, and are more cool-headed than men in emergencies.

5: IN WHICH OCCUPATIONS ARE WOMEN LIKELY TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE FUTURE?

Forecasting manpower requirements involves making assumptions about the types and quantities of products people will be buying in the future; how products will be produced; how much employers will have to pay men and women, and so on.

The basic pattern of employment in Canada for the past several decades has been faster growth in the service industries than in manufacturing industries, and faster growth of service, clerical and professional occupations than the labour force itself. This is a characteristic of a maturing economy.

Most economies begin their development by exploiting their primary resources. For instance, they cut trees, mine asbestos, harvest wheat, and sell them in the unprocessed state. As the country acquires money and technology, it establishes a secondary industrial sector — it builds pulp mills and newsprint plants, for example. It builds the manufacturing facilities to refine and

(15) Monica Boyd, "Equality Between the Sexes: Results of Canadian Gallup Polls, 1953-73," Carleton University, Ottawa (mimeo.).

process its raw materials. Once the secondary sector is underway, the economy moves to the next stage of industrial development: building tertiary, or service-oriented industries.

At the beginning of each stage of development, the job opportunities in the primary, secondary or tertiary industries tend to grow extremely rapidly. Thus, as the professional, service and clerical occupations continue to grow most rapidly, the job opportunities for professional women should grow as well.

Two interrelated factors are working against the expectation that women will be more widely represented among professional occupations in future.

The first is the general state of the economy. If the economy is operating below its potential, job opportunities in general will not be as widespread as if the economy were operating closer to full employment. Slack economic activity can persist over several years, as it has in Canada (Canada's average unemployment rate has been above 4 per cent of the labour force for a full decade). Because of society's traditional conception of women, the job opportunities that are available in which women compete with men are almost invariably going to be offered to men.

The second force opposing the increasing diversification of women in the professions is society's conception of women and work.

Jane Prather⁽¹⁶⁾ has suggested that two basic images of women prevail in our society — women as sexual objects, and women as servants.

Not surprisingly, most jobs deemed appropriate for women capitalize upon one or both of these images. The image of woman as a sexual object or status symbol emphasizes the physical attractiveness of the female body and face, and de-emphasizes the other attributes of the woman, such as intelligence, creativity, ideas and so on. In contrast, men may be evaluated on the basis of what they do, what they think, and what they believe, as well as how they look. Whereas an unattractive man may be evaluated on other dimensions, the unattractive woman may be considered successful in other arenas simply because she is so drab, or else she is assumed to be unattractive because she pursues other interests, and therefore, neglects her appearance. Even when a woman has accomplishments and attributes in other areas of her life, she may still be evaluated in terms of sex appeal. For example, female athletes in sports feature articles are frequently described not only in terms of their athletic feats but also their physical attractiveness; female executives, similarly, find they are evaluated on appearance as well as on job performance, and female political candidates note that newspaper reporters are often more interested in their clothing than in their ideas.

There is also a belief in society that "beauty and brains do not mix." The woman who does make intellectual contributions is often described as an "ugly duckling" in the mass media. Conversely, a beautiful woman engaged in a career is suspect because an employer who subscribes to the beauty-brains myth may assume an attractive woman is "dumb" or that the woman has become successful through her sex appeal, not through her abilities.

Women suffer many disadvantages when they are perceived as sex objects. One problem is that the woman

⁽¹⁶⁾ American Behavioral Scientist, *op. cit.*

is never taken seriously as a person, and her ideas are considered trivial. Another is that she is valued not for her contributions to the situation, but for the social status she may provide her male companions.

The second image of woman perpetuated by society is that of the servant, where women are portrayed as serving others in the nurturing and caretaking roles such as mother, housewife, volunteer, or nurse. The origin of this image is the assumption that women innately, instinctively or hormonally are adept at nurturing, sacrificing, and caring for others.

The servant image of woman establishes myths that hinder her advancement in the labour force. For example, the servant image of women promotes the myth that women will work for very little money or gratis as volunteers. The myth also implies that most women are being cared for by a husband and do not need financial rewards from work. As noted earlier, close to half of the three million women who work do so to support themselves or others. U.S. statistics⁽¹⁷⁾ show that the majority of married women in the labour force have husbands whose annual income is less than \$10,000.

These two images of women hinder them from having a wide choice of occupations and from rising to top positions. Most jobs designated as "women's work" stress either the beauty image, such as actress, model, secretary, or the servant image in jobs of nurse, teacher, social worker, or a combination of both such as stewardess, bank teller, receptionist, and some secretaries. The woman who seeks a job outside the traditional

line of women's work is assumed to be invading unnatural territory. Even the woman who does make it to a top profession often discovers that she is still expected to fulfil the images of sex object or servant. For example, she may encounter employers who expect her to fill in for an absent secretary, welcome new executives, or serve as a hostess at important business functions.

Both these conceptions of women emphasize behaviour that is dependent, "other-oriented," passive and non-assertive. When these behavioural roles are reinforced in the socialization society imposes from childhood, a self-fulfilling prophecy develops. Children are reared to behave as the stereotype requires. Girls are given make-up kits, model kitchens, and nurse uniforms to imitate adult roles; while boys are provided with doctor kits, space suits, and construction tools. Beliefs about the appropriate behaviour for each sex are so firmly implanted in society's institutions that parents often are upset when children do not follow the accepted regimen for each sex.

Prather suggests that society's concept of women is coupled with a "masculine" concept of work.

Work is widely and popularly defined as performing a task for which one is rewarded monetarily. Despite a woman's full day's activities of managing a household and children, unless she receives monetary compensation, she is not assumed to be working. Therefore, by implying that only men work, society attributes higher status to men. This definition of work discriminates against women in the labour force because it upholds the belief that women are not interested in earning a living or in establishing their economic independence.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Similar Canadian statistics are not available.

Moreover, the definition of work promotes the myths that women in the labour force are not to be considered permanent, serious workers, and therefore, not to be regarded as contenders for promotions, advancements or higher wages.

Because of the widespread acceptance of the notion that only men work, another myth emerges that it is morally wrong for women — particularly married women or mothers — to work. Women, then, who are active in the labour force may deny that they intend to work throughout their lifetime or deny that they enjoy working. This denial of women working for their own objectives leads to the common belief that the working wife or mother “has to work,” a phrase which implies that the woman would really rather not work, that she really prefers to remain in her place at home.

Because of society’s acceptance of the definition of work as a masculine pursuit, few women seek or adequately prepare for a meaningful career, and consequently few opportunities for a career are afforded to them. A self-fulfilling prophecy then develops because, as few careers are open to women, few women seek or prepare for them. The belief that women do not want careers then becomes a reality. Women perpetuate the prophecy because they can see few role models of women who have successfully achieved or managed a career combined with motherhood.

The myth and self-fulfilling prophecy that women really do not want a career allows an employer to justify offering women lower salaries, fewer promotions, and fewer incentives than men. Since women often receive little motivation or incentive to pursue a career, they frequently use marriage or maternity as excuses for abandoning it. This practice again perpetuates the self-

fulfilling prophecy that women really would rather remain at home than pursue a career. Society does not even acknowledge that being a wife and mother is in itself a career.

The belief that a career is a masculine pursuit has a devastating effect upon the woman who does seek a career. By implication the woman is perhaps masculine or unfeminine, and therefore, less desirable as wife or companion to men. Since women also want to be attractive to men, the career woman may often encounter the dilemma of feeling that on the one hand if she pursues her career she will be less desirable to men, and on the other, if she forgets her career, she may gain masculine attention but lose her own self-respect and goals.

Because work is defined in masculine ways and because work is so vitally important for men in our society, the masculine family roles are also defined in terms of work. A good husband and a good father are almost synonymous with being a good provider. A man, in contrast to a woman, may justify spending long hours on the job or validate absences from his family on the grounds they are essential for his career and ultimately done for the sake of his family. The popular term “family man” means a good provider, and one who is successful on the job.

Note that there is no comparable term to “family man” which is applicable to women, because it is assumed that the woman is the family, and that if she pursues her own career or own interests she does so at the expense of the family, not for the sake of the family. The working mother faces potential criticism from many different sources — mass media, relatives, her children, other women, pediatricians, school author-

ities, and so on — all of whom may claim the mother, by working, is causing irreparable damage to her children. Frequently, the working mother is asked how she could leave her children to go to work while no one even considers asking the same question of the working father. The psychological strains the working mother encounters because of society's expectation that child care should be a mother's full-time, if not lifetime obligation, form another barrier which may hinder her success in a career.

Another hindrance to a woman's success in the upper echelons of business and the professions is that women in these work situations may be excluded from the informal situations — such as bull sessions, bars, golf courses, or tennis clubs where her male co-workers are making important decisions. The woman discovers her influence and her ideas are not reflected in these decisions, since she was not present when they were made.

As long as society continues to view women as sex objects and servants, employers are unlikely to consider women as serious participants in the labour force who can command responsible positions and demand higher salaries. Because of the many myths society holds about women, many men do not treat their women co-workers as equals. Furthermore, if society continues to regard work, a career, or a full-time occupation as masculine pursuits, few women will be offered top professional positions, and few women will strive to seek the few opportunities open. Even if the laws and policies which discriminate against women achieving equality with men in the labour force are eliminated, the battle for equality will not be won. What is also required is an exposé of the myths and beliefs that entrench attitudes and limit women's potentiality.

APPENDIX

1971 CENSUS

Canadian Classification of Occupations Major, Minor and Unit Groups

*Indicates the "professional" classifications used in this paper.

CODE NO.

- (0000-9926) All Occupations
 - 0000 Occupation not stated
- (1111-1179) Major Group II — Managerial, Administrative and Related Occupations
 - (1111-1119) OFFICIALS AND ADMINISTRATORS UNIQUE TO GOVERNMENT
 - 1111* Members of legislative bodies
 - 1113* Government administrators
 - 1115 Postmasters
 - 1116 Inspectors and regulatory officers, government
 - 1119* Officials and administrators unique to government, *n.e.c.*
 - (1130-1158) OTHER MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS
 - 1130* General managers and other senior officials
 - 1131* Management occupations, natural sciences and engineering
 - 1132* Management occupations, social sciences and related fields
 - 1133* Administrators in teaching and related fields
 - 1134* Administrators in medicine and health
 - 1135* Financial management occupations
 - 1136* Personnel and industrial relations management occupations

- 1137 Sales and Advertising management occupations
- 1141 Purchasing management occupations
- 1142 Services management occupations
- 1143 Production management occupations
- 1145 Management occupations, construction operations
- 1147 Management occupations, transport and communications operations
- 1149 Other managers and administrators, *n.e.c.*

(1151-1158) OTHER MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS, *N.E.C.* in (1149)

- 1151 Mines (incl. milling), quarries and oil wells (Ind. 051-099)
- 1152 Durable goods manufacturing (Ind. 251-268, 291-359)
- 1153 Non-durable goods manufacturing (Ind. 101-249, 271-289, 365-399)
- 1154 Construction (Ind. 404-421)
- 1155 Transportation, communication and other utilities (Ind. 501-579)
- 1156 Trade (Ind. 602-699)
- 1157 Community, business and personal service industries (Ind. 801-899)
- 1158 Other industries and unspecified (Ind. 000, 001-047, 701-737, 902-991)

(1171-1179) OCCUPATIONS RELATED TO MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1171* Accountants, auditors and other financial officers
- 1174* Personnel and related officers
- 1175* Purchasing officers and buyers, except wholesale and retail trade
- 1176 Inspectors and regulatory officers, non-government

1179	Occupations related to management and administration, <i>n.e.c.</i>	(2160-2169)	OTHER OCCUPATIONS IN ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING
(2111-2189)	Major Group 21 — Occupations in Natural Sciences, Engineering and Mathematics	2160*	Supervisors: other occupations in architecture and engineering
		2161*	Surveyors
		2163*	Draftsmen
(2111-2119)	OCCUPATIONS IN PHYSICAL SCIENCES	2165*	Architectural and engineering technologists and technicians
2111*	Chemists	2169	Other occupations in architecture and engineering, <i>n.e.c.</i>
2112*	Geologists		
2113*	Physicists	(2181-2189)	OCCUPATIONS IN MATHEMATICS, STATISTICS, SYSTEMS ANALYSIS AND RELATED FIELDS
2114*	Meteorologists	2181*	Mathematicians, statisticians and actuaries
2117*	Physical sciences technologists and technicians	2183*	Systems analysts, computer programmers and related occupations
2119*	Occupations in Physical sciences, <i>n.e.c.</i>	2189*	Occupations in mathematics, statistics, systems analysis and related fields, <i>n.e.c.</i>
(2131-2139)	OCCUPATIONS IN LIFE SCIENCES	(2311-2399)	Major Group 23 — Occupations in Social Sciences and Related Fields
2131*	Agriculturalists and related scientists		
2133*	Biologists and related scientists	(2311-2319)	OCCUPATIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES
2135*	Life sciences technologists and technicians	2311*	Economists
2139	Occupations in life sciences, <i>n.e.c.</i>	2313*	Sociologists, anthropologists and related social scientists
(2141-2159)	ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS	2315*	Psychologists
2141*	Architects	2319*	Occupations in social sciences, <i>n.e.c.</i>
2142*	Chemical engineers		
2143*	Civil engineers	(2331-2339)	OCCUPATIONS IN SOCIAL WORK AND RELATED FIELDS
2144*	Electrical engineers	2331*	Social workers
2145*	Industrial engineers	2333*	Occupations in welfare and community services
2147*	Mechanical engineers		
2151*	Metallurgical engineers		
2153*	Mining engineers		
2154*	Petroleum engineers		
2155*	Aeronautical engineers		
2157*	Nuclear engineers		
2159*	Architects and engineers, <i>n.e.c.</i>		

2339	Occupations in social work and related fields, <i>n.e.c.</i>	(2711-2719)	UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS
(2341-2349)	OCCUPATIONS IN LAW AND JURISPRUDENCE	2711*	University teachers
2341*	Judges and magistrates	2719	University teaching and related occupations, <i>n.e.c.</i>
2343*	Lawyers and notaries	(2731-2739)	ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHING AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS
2349	Occupations in law and jurisprudence, <i>n.e.c.</i>	2731*	Elementary and Kindergarten teachers
(2350-2359)	OCCUPATIONS IN LIBRARY, MUSEUM AND ARCHIVAL SCIENCES	2733*	Secondary school teachers
2350*	Supervisors: occupations in library, museum and archival sciences	2739*	Elementary and secondary school teaching and related occupations, <i>n.e.c.</i>
2351*	Librarians and archivists	(2791-2799)	OTHER TEACHING AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS
2353*	Technicians in library, museum and archival sciences	2791*	Community college and vocational school teachers
2359	Occupations in library, museum and archival sciences, <i>n.e.c.</i>	2792*	Fine arts school teachers, <i>n.e.c.</i>
(2391-2399)	OTHER OCCUPATIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND RELATED FIELDS	2793*	Post-secondary school teachers, <i>n.e.c.</i>
2391	Educational and vocational counsellors	2795*	Teachers of exceptional students, <i>n.e.c.</i>
2399	Other occupations in social sciences and related fields, <i>n.e.c.</i>	2797	Instructors and training officers, <i>n.e.c.</i>
(2511-2519)	Major Group 25 — Occupations in Religion	2799	Other teaching and related occupations, <i>n.e.c.</i>
(2511-2519)	OCCUPATIONS IN RELIGION	(3111-3159)	Major Group 31 — Occupations in Medi- cine and Health
2511*	Ministers of religion	(3111-3119)	HEALTH DIAGNOSING AND TREATING OCCUPATIONS
2513*	Nuns and brothers (W), <i>n.o.r.</i>	3111*	Physicians and surgeons
2519	Occupations in religion, <i>n.e.c.</i>	3113*	Dentists
(2711-2799)	Major Group 27 — Teaching and Related Occupations	3115*	Veterinarians
		3117*	Osteopaths and chiropractors
		3119	Health diagnosing and treating occupations, <i>n.e.c.</i>

(3130-3139) NURSING, THERAPY AND RELATED ASSISTING OCCUPATIONS

- 3130* Supervisors: nursing occupations
- 3131* Nurses, graduate, except supervisors
- 3133* Nurses-in-training
- 3134 Nursing assistants
- 3135 Nursing aides and orderlies
- 3137* Physiotherapists, occupational and other therapists
- 3139 Nursing, therapy and related assisting occupations, *n.e.c.*

(3151-3159) OTHER OCCUPATIONS IN MEDICINE AND HEALTH

- 3151* Pharmacists
- 3152* Dieticians and nutritionists
- 3153* Optometrists
- 3154* Dispensing opticians
- 3155* Radiological technologists and technicians
- 3156* Medical laboratory technologists and technicians
- 3157* Dental hygienists, assistants and technicians
- 3159 Other occupations in medicine and health, *n.e.c.*

(3311-3379) Major Group 33 — Artistic, Literary, Recreational and Related Occupations

(3311-3319) OCCUPATIONS IN FINE AND COMMERCIAL ART, PHOTOGRAPHY AND RELATED FIELDS

- 3311* Painters, sculptors and related artists
- 3313* Product and interior designers
- 3314* Advertising and illustrating artists
- 3315* Photographers and cameramen

- 3319 Occupations in fine and commercial art, photography and related fields, *n.e.c.*

(3330-3339) OCCUPATIONS IN PERFORMING AND AUDIO-VISUAL ARTS

- 3330* Producers and directors, performing and audio-visual arts
- 3332* Musicians
- 3333* Dancers and choreographers
- 3335* Actors
- 3337* Radio and television announcers
- 3339 Occupations in performing and audio-visual arts, *n.e.c.*

(3352-3359) OCCUPATIONS IN WRITING

- 3352* Writers and editors
- 3355* Translators and interpreters
- 3359 Occupations in writing, *n.e.c.*

(3370-3379) OCCUPATIONS IN SPORT AND RECREATION

- 3370* Coaches, trainers, instructors and managers, sport and recreation
- 3371* Referees and related officials
- 3373* Athletes
- 3375 Attendants, sport and recreation
- 3379 Occupations in sport and recreation, *n.e.c.*

(4110-4199) Major Group 41 — Clerical and Related Occupations

(4110-4113) STENOGRAPHIC AND TYPING
OCCUPATIONS

- 4110 Supervisors: stenographic and typing occupations
- 4111 Secretaries and stenographers
- 4113 Typists and clerk-typists

(4130-4139) BOOKKEEPING, ACCOUNT-
RECORDING AND RELATED
OCCUPATIONS

- 4130 Supervisors: Bookkeeping, account-recording and related occupations
- 4131 Bookkeepers and accounting clerks
- 4133 Tellers and cashiers
- 4135 Insurance, bank and other finance clerks
- 4137 Statistical clerks
- 4139 Bookkeeping, account-recording and related occupations, *n.e.c.*

THE DISADVANTAGED
WOMAN

MARGARET DALY



A Man Away from Poverty

THE DISADVANTAGED WOMAN

MARGARET DALY

Frances, 25, is a single mother in Regina, supporting a five-year-old son. For the past eight years, since graduating from high school, she has worked at low-paying, dull, clerical office jobs. She expects she'll always have to.

Valerie is a 26-year-old welfare mother in Thunder Bay, Ontario, with two invalid sons aged seven and three. She has been on the province's family benefits program since her first child was born. She has no expectation of living differently in the foreseeable future.

Donna, 21, of Toronto, was married for six months and has a three-and-one-half-year-old daughter. A former postal clerk, she too is now on family benefits. But she is painstakingly training herself—with no financial assistance and against heavy odds—to re-enter the work force, this time as a professional.

Just listening to these three women tell in their own words about the ways they live, and why, is worth volumes of dry, government-compiled statistics about the disadvantaged woman in Canada. All three are, in the jargon of social statisticians, "household heads"—and the households they head exist well below any of the accepted definitions of the Canadian poverty line. All three have in common youth, intelligence, and an ability to view their own lives with dispassionate clarity and not self-pity. They have something else in common: Lives that have been shaped not by any choices or decisions they have made, but by larger forces—forces of society that have crushed and moulded them into a lifestyle of poverty, of "disadvantage," because they are women.

Their three situations—that of a working woman who will probably always be poor or close to it, that of a permanent welfare recipient, and that of a temporary welfare recipient struggling to become financially independent—illustrate vividly the plight of the disadvantaged woman in Canada.

Her disadvantage, so-called, is that she is not financially dependent, wholly or partly, on a man.

This fact, a wealth of statistics show, is central to being a disadvantaged woman in this country. To be sure, the demeaning reality is sometimes hidden, and sometimes disguised, in the statistics—among breakdowns according to geographical region, age, ethnic group, white-native-Métis, and everything else. But the statistics can be pieced together to show that most Canadian women are no farther than a man away from poverty. If the man is in fact away—or was never around in the first place—the odds that a woman will be poor increase astronomically, whether she is state-supported like Valerie, a wage earner like Frances, or training for a job like Donna.

The nuts and bolts of these three women's lives are straightforward enough.

Frances worked for seven years as a file clerk and then as a shorthand typist for the university. The wages were always low to the point of being exploitive, and babysitters' fees always took at least a full third of them. When she quit last summer, she'd worked her way up to a salary of \$400 a month. Now, working in an insurance office, she makes \$600 monthly, and is living "in a nice apartment, with my own furniture" for the first time. Also for the first time, she has been able to place

her son in a professionally staffed day-care centre for half-days—relatively expensive from her point of view, but “like a thousand pounds lifted off my shoulders” after the anxieties over poor quality and unreliability of the only private babysitting arrangements she could ever afford.

“It’s the way I was raised; you get out and work,” Frances says matter-of-factly about her situation. Her manner is quietly assertive and self-confident, the pressures she lives under detectable only in her quick, nervous hand gestures and cynical, sometimes abrupt way of speaking.

“I wasn’t born with it, nobody gave it to me, I didn’t want to go on welfare, so I worked for it. I worked up till David was born and then again since he was three weeks old. And from the start, and even now I *still* get really crummy, shitty jobs that don’t pay much or go anywhere.”

It’s not that Frances feels any smugness or moral superiority about her dogged insistence on making her own way. She has no illusions about her dignity as a worker, just an instinct that the indignity of welfare would be even harder to bear.

“When I worked at the university I used to look around sometimes at these kids on their research projects with their cushy grants and all, and it really tore me up,” she says. “There was I, the sucker of the year, working away nine to five for peanuts.

“But I was on welfare once, emergency welfare when I lost a job, and that was enough for me. The way they treat you! I consider myself pretty tough, but half an

hour with one of these people defeats me. So I told myself then, I’ll never let myself get in a position where they can do that to me ever again.

“But sometimes, when you’ve got all these drains and strains on you . . . Like for instance, when David’s regular babysitter went to California this winter. For two weeks I used to take him on the bus to the day-care centre at 8:30, get to work at 10 after 9, sneak away from work at a quarter past 11, catch the bus to go pick him up. If he wasn’t at the bus stop, get off the bus and go to the school and get him, wait 15 minutes for the next bus downtown, get there at noon, catch a connecting bus at a quarter after to take him up to the new woman who was watching him while the other was away, talk to her for a while, and maybe have a peanut-butter sandwich or something because she’s on mother’s allowance and doesn’t have much money, but I’ve got no other time for lunch, smoke four or five cigarettes, instant coffee, back to work, get there about 1 or 1:30 and try to catch up. But by this time my whole day is shot! Splintered, you know. And I mean, what for? I really asked myself. What for? It’s so stupid.”

Frances’ bitterness as she spoke was never directed against the women who have chosen to stay home with their children and receive social assistance, however.

“Their trap is different from mine,” is all she says about that. “I wasn’t working all that time for the best interests of my child; it was for the best interests of *me*. I could never have stood being cooped up with a small child twelve hours a day; I’d have gone crackers.”

Valerie, the welfare mother, is reticent about that aspect of her life, although the invalid conditions of

each of her boys must have made the role of full-time mother a doubly taxing one. Her older son suffered a nose and throat condition throughout infancy that required 24-hour attention until it was corrected by a series of operations; her three-year-old has hearing problems that are currently under treatment. Valerie's hope that the condition can be corrected is undermined by her cynicism—a cynicism well-founded by the experiences of herself and her friends—about the quality of health care for the poor in Thunder Bay, of which one of her friends told us: "This has got to be the most frightening place to be if you're sick, because if you don't have the money or connections to get out of here, to a specialist in Toronto, forget it, baby; just curl up and die."

A frail, tired woman, Valerie is obviously devoted to her children, resentful of her situation but not of those around her, worn beyond her 26 years but warmly determined in her speech—and resigned for the present to a marginal existence on welfare.

"I never did finish high school; there was no encouragement from my parents, and when I quit it was because I was just tired of it and they let me," Valerie recalls wearily. "I should have finished, I was bright enough, but I didn't, and I kick my ass for that now."

"When I did get pregnant and had my first son I didn't know anything about mother's allowance or anything like that. I was ready to go out and make the best of it. But these agency people came while I was in hospital and said to me, you can have it, and so I said, well, okay for now, and I took it."

"There was my baby and he was ill. Who's gonna look after a kid who when you're feeding him, he can't

breathe out of his nose and he's throwing up all over you constantly. I used to wear this old-fashioned apron that covered me from the neck to the feet when I fed the kid; you'd give him his milk and it came vomiting out of his mouth right away, and the whole process took hours. A lot of times I could have picked up my son and just chucked him against the wall. And I love my kid! How could I have got a babysitter to take that responsibility? No one would."

"So I thought, well, sure, I'll take your welfare."

"But the pros and cons of it . . . They want to know everything you're doing; if you want to do anything a little bit personal you have to go behind their backs constantly. So there's this constant nagging guilt. Pretty soon you have it, the guilt, even when you haven't done anything wrong."

Constant, nagging guilt is Valerie's part of a bargain with society that provides her with the \$309 a month in family benefits, plus \$44.16 in federal monthly baby bonuses, that make up her total income—just as long days at dull jobs and exhausting excursions to and from the homes of babysitters have been Frances' bargain with society for \$400 a month as a wage earner. Given Frances' extra expenses as a worker, such as bus fare and contributions to unemployment insurance, and Valerie's fringe benefits from welfare such as government-paid prescription drugs, the real incomes of the two women were remarkably similar for many years—in fact, until Frances' first substantial salary increase, last summer.

Rent takes \$175 a month from each woman, and the rest quickly goes for the bare essentials of life. Children

require good-quality warm clothing in cities like Regina and Thunder Bay; nourishing food, particularly fresh fruit and vegetables, is more expensive there than in southern Ontario. Unlike larger, more densely developed centres, middle-sized cities like Regina and Thunder Bay create particular handicaps for those without cars. The public transportation systems are usually of far lower quality than in big cities, and services like doctors or even laundromats are less likely to be within walking distance.

"At the end of the month, very often, there is just no food in our house," Valerie says. Her voice has a breathless quality, rising at the edge of each phrase, not with self-pity but with a slight edge of desperation. "And I had to go bum food from my mum and dad because the kids—I don't mind so much for myself but the kids—are hungry. Especially Martin (her older boy). Lately Martin's *hungry*, all the time!

"At this point one time my mother's allowance cheque was stolen out of my mailbox. The person who did it knew me pretty well, I guess—I still don't know for sure who it was but I have my ideas—and took it to the grocery store where I cash mine, and forged my signature.

"Well, detectives came to my house, Social and Family Services came to my house, and I had to sign mounds of papers stating that I didn't steal the cheque and that if I did steal it they could take me to court, and the detectives were throwing all these questions at me . . . And I had to go to emergency welfare and get vouchers and all this sort of shit, this paper money, it's really embarrassing, little yellow slips that this one is supposed to be a dollar and this one is supposed to be ten cents and so on.

"Finally when the cheque was processed in Toronto, they had it sent all the way back here, and brought to my house, and I had to sign my name beside it to prove it wasn't my signature, when they've already got a million cheques with my signature on them. And this was . . . well, it was very close. It made me blush.

"And I felt guilty! I felt that guilty! And I didn't steal it! I wasn't trying to rip them off! And . . . and . . . I just don't like it," Valerie concluded, her voice winding down wearily. "If there was a means and ways to get off it—just to tell them to *shove* their welfare—I would really do it, gladly." But she says the words flatly, not with any lack of sincerity, but in the tone of someone longing for something that she knows just does not exist.

Donna, in Toronto, echoes Valerie's state of mind about welfare: "Even if you're not doing anything wrong, you feel guilty for being on it." Unlike Valerie—perhaps because she's five years younger and has been on welfare for only three years to Valerie's seven, perhaps because of the greater opportunities in Toronto, or perhaps partly, as she herself suggests, because of her upbringing by a tough, independent mother—she has not resigned herself to the life indefinitely.

She is training herself to become a professional drummer and plans to work steadily, as soon as she's good enough, in one of Toronto's multitude of rock, pop or country and western bands. It's extremely difficult, demanding work, but she wants it and has a real talent for it. And, she observes practically, while it's not the easiest business in the world to make a decent living at, at least it's a unionized profession which means estab-

lished minimum pay scales and it doesn't require years of formal training.

"I worked since leaving home when I was 16, at the post office; I worked when I was pregnant and then again after I had my baby," Donna says. "But after my marriage broke up it just wasn't worth working. Because you don't make enough, after you pay babysitters, and your rent, and food when you're on your own. I've been on welfare almost three years; they pay my rent" (\$85 a month for a small two-bedroom apartment in an Ontario Housing Corporation highrise in a Toronto suburb), "plus \$21 every two weeks because I get \$20 a week child-support from my ex-husband.

"But on welfare, first of all you're always put down by people, and if you live in Ontario Housing like I do, you're put down for that, too. Then there's your privacy: you don't have any. Like, they have that rule about having a man in the house; they can come any time to check up. And you never really feel like you're on your own... And men! They have this attitude that if you're on welfare, well, you're leaning on it, so you're probably waiting around for a chance to lean on *them*. If you're a single mother they assume you want a husband, which is ridiculous, right? Because I'm a single mother because I *didn't* want a husband," she says with a short laugh.

"It's very hard for middle-class people to understand. They say we don't try to better ourselves, but God knows some of us really do try. But God, how you've got the odds against you.

"I went to Canada Manpower one time, shortly after I got on welfare. I was told by my worker, when she saw all my crafts and all, that I could be an art teacher. So I

went down, but they don't teach you stuff like that. They teach you business — shorthand, typing, you know — and stuff like hairdressing. And I couldn't be paid to go back to school because I'd quit in Grade 12. You can only have Grade 10 or something if you're being paid to go to school. So I'd have had to pay for the courses on my own, and there was no way I could do that.

"But I'm working for something now, and that's the only thing that keeps me going. Some of the other women in this building... I don't know how they stand the life."

By "working for something," Donna means an eventual career in the music business. Any idea that this odd choice of career is some sort of adolescent fantasy on Donna's part vanishes under the evidence of the deadly serious professionalism with which she approaches her drumming. She takes one good, long lesson a month from a top-quality teacher, which she manages to pay for by not smoking, drinking, ever going out, or ever buying any clothes for herself. She practises several hours a day (with towels on all her drums to muffle the sound, in deference to her neighbours) — hard to concentrate though it is with three-and-a-half-year-old Sara around.

Recently a community sponsored day-care project in her apartment building has given her two hours' free time in the afternoon, which she uses for intensive practising. The five-dollar a month fee is hard to scrape up but "it's worth it — for me and for Sara; she likes it and she's learning all sorts of things."

Donna's big fear is of the time when she becomes good enough to get her first job in the music business.

"Everyone laughed when I started working at it. The only one who took me seriously was my music teacher because he could see some potential. Everyone else laughed. My case worker kind of freaked out because, you know, girls don't do that. Play the drums. They're still laughing, but not as much; they're starting to change their tune a bit because they know I'm serious, as serious as any man. It's a profession to me like it would be to a man, and that's what most people can't comprehend. They think because I'm a mother, and a welfare mother at that, that I can't do something and do it professionally. But if you can be good enough it's not that insecure a business — there's studio work, bars, a lot of doors open all over town.

"But any profession is hard to break into, no matter how good you are, and I'm only allowed to earn \$100 a month while on family benefits. If I got a job at union scale for even one week I'd be off family benefits and I don't know whether I'd be able to get back on again, and yet there's bound to be long periods between jobs while I was breaking into the business.

"It's scary. I can understand why most women don't even try. But it's the chance I have to take, right? Because I can't stay and rot like this forever."

THE FACTS VS. THE MYTHS

Frances, Valerie and Donna have chronicled their circumstances at some length, not only because they add a human dimension to the vast quantity of published material about disadvantaged women in Canada, but also because they are each, in many ways, a prototype of the disadvantaged woman. Many of the characteristics that make them typical may run con-

trary to some of the widely held myths surrounding women in poverty, but they do not run contrary to the facts.

For instance, it was argued by more than one observer that our three women were not "typical" because each had only one or two children; the typical poor woman is supposed to have a larger-than-average family. However, according to the 1971 Census the average number of children aged up to 24 living in single-mother-headed families was only 1.7. The average size of the welfare family in Canada, according to a mammoth federal-provincial study, *The World of the Welfare Recipient*, is 2.9 members. And in the *Canadian Fact Book on Poverty: 1974*, David P. Ross, program director on income security for the Canadian Council on Social Development, points out that "larger families (five or more) have given way to two-member families as the most common family size living in poverty. In fact, in 1973, 76 per cent of all low-income families had two or fewer children under the age of 16 — which certainly lays bare the folklore that ties poverty to large families."

Nor was the fact that our working mother was no better off than our welfare mother a particularly unusual situation. It is perhaps not surprising that the 1971 Census showed 90 per cent of single-parent-headed families on social assistance were receiving less than \$6,000 a year. Considerably more alarming, however, is that almost half the single-parent-headed families who were not on social assistance were earning less than \$6,000 a year. One can probably safely eliminate from this group most of the single-parent families headed by men, which comprise 21 per cent of the total, because the median income of a male-headed family was \$10,546, compared with the median income of

\$4,039 for a female-headed family. When this is done, the figure jumps to well over half the single-mother-headed families *not* on social assistance but earning less than \$6,000 — as did Frances until last summer.

WHO IS POOR? WHAT IS POOR?

The key factor in making Frances, Valerie and Donna prototypes of the disadvantaged woman in Canada is that their disadvantage is the result of being, in the statisticians' jargon, female heads of families. The most marked trend involving the poor in Canada over the past several years has been the increasing proportion of poor who live in female-headed families.

There is no single "official" poverty line, or definition of what constitutes poverty, in Canada; in fact, there sometimes appear to be as many different definitions as there are government departments and social agencies. The three most widely used are those of Statistics Canada, which is sometimes also used by the Economic Council of Canada; of the Canadian Council on Social Development; and of the Special Senate Committee on Poverty. All use one of two basic approaches, however — the absolute approach and the relative approach. Under the first, a list of basic family needs is determined, and if your income isn't high enough to provide you with them, you're poor. Under the second, if your income is a certain percentage less than the average income for society at large, you're poor.

Under both approaches — and using any of the commonly used poverty definitions in Canada — you stand the best chance of being poor if you're a female heading a family.

In 1961, 7.8 per cent of all Canadian families were female-headed and 92.2 per cent male-headed. Among the poor, the proportion changed to 12.2 per cent female-headed and 86.8 per cent male-headed. Female-headed families, in other words, formed a disproportionate amount of the poor, as might be expected, but not outlandishly disproportionate.

By 1973, however — according to Statistics Canada's regularly updated poverty lines — while female-headed families had increased *somewhat* as part of the general population, from 7.8 per cent to 8.6 per cent of it, they had increased *significantly* as a proportion of the poor population — from 12.2 per cent in 1961, and 13.2 per cent in 1967, to 28.7 per cent in 1973. By 1973, the proportion of female-headed families in poverty, in other words, was no longer *slightly* greater than their proportion in society at large; it was *three times* greater. The female-headed family was almost five times more likely to be poor than its male-headed counterpart.

As David P. Ross points out in his *Canadian Fact Book on Poverty: 1974*, in which he analyzes the Statistics Canada figures, it is also noteworthy that for the first time the combination of female heads of families, plus those over 65 years of age, now make up more than half the poor population of Canada, although they comprise only 21.2 per cent of the Canadian population in general.

Ross also looks in detail at the likelihood a family will be in poverty given a specific characteristic — in 1961, 1967 and 1973. In 1961, about one in four families in the population-at-large was likely to be in poverty. According to Statistics Canada's definition at that time, the average Canadian family spent 50 per cent of

its income on bare essentials; if you spent 70 per cent or more, you were considered poor. By 1973, this had dropped by half, to one in eight families.

Various other characteristics, of course, made it more or less likely that a family would be poor. If they lived in the Maritimes, for instance, they were twice as likely to be poor as if they lived in Ontario; if the household head was over 65, the family was likelier to be poor than if the head was young; and so on.

But under no specific circumstances was a family more likely to be poor than if it was female-headed.

In 1961, a female-headed family had a 42 per cent chance of being poor; in 1973, the figure had dropped only two percentage points, to 40 per cent.

The statistic is alarming in view of the fact that the chance of being poor (by Statistics Canada's yardstick, which Ross uses) for families generally had been cut in half during the same period.

Ross observes that a male head of family has a 9.3 per cent chance of being poor; that is, slightly more than nine male-headed families out of every hundred will be poor. In contrast, 40 of every one hundred female-headed families will be poor solely by virtue of having a female head.

Every kind of specific-characteristic breakdown that Ross makes, except one, shows significant improvement away from the likelihood of poverty — unsurprising since poverty likelihood at large dropped by half in the last 12 years. For example Maritimers, while still the likeliest to be poor when Canadians are characterized by region, dropped from a 45.3 per cent likelihood

of being poor to an 18.8 per cent likelihood of being poor between 1961 and 1973. Senior citizens, although the age group likeliest to be poor, also showed marked improvement in the same period — from 43.9 per cent to 21.1 per cent.

"The only likelihood figure *not* to show any significant improvement," Ross concludes, "is that for female-headed families.

"If the general improvement registered by all other groups had also been registered by this group, then the likelihood of poverty for this group should have fallen from 42.6 per cent in 1961 to about 21 per cent in 1973, but in fact it fell only slightly, to 40.1 per cent.

"This lack of improvement," he adds in what some might think a rather mild understatement, "should be disturbing to all."

Ross goes on to note: "Old age is a significant factor affecting low incomes . . . but . . . to be elderly and female is the worst of all, but to be young and female is only fractionally better. This same correspondence does not hold between elderly and young males."

He suggests that the frightening implications of these figures have often been obscured by users of the statistics who assume that the women in them "are likely part of a family unit which contains a higher-income male member." This assumption is wrong, he warns: "The data are for female *heads* of families, and thus they represent either single-parent mothers or unattached individuals."

Only 17.4 per cent of all male-headed families earned less than \$5,000 a year in 1973. Most of them were in

the over-65 category. Younger than that, a man was unlikely to make so little; in fact, he was statistically more likely to make more than \$15,000, than less than \$5,000; and his average income was \$11,997.

On the other hand, female heads of families making less than \$5,000 a year made up 59.0 per cent of their total number. Over 65 years old, to be sure, the figure jumped to 73.6 per cent; but at no stage of life does the woman who headed a family have as much as half a chance — literally — of making more than \$5,000. (And she has a paltry 2.4 per cent chance of making more than \$15,000.)

POVERTY INDICATORS

Defining who is poor and who is not, of course, continues to be a favourite pastime of sociologists and statisticians. If we used, for example, Ferdinand Lundberg's definition of poverty in *The Rich and the Super-Rich*, the vast majority of Canadian women would qualify:

"Anyone who does not own a substantial amount of income-producing property or does not receive an earned income sufficiently large to make substantial regular savings, or does not hold a well-paid, securely tenured job is poor. He may be healthy, handsome, and a delight to his friends — but he is poor."

We might vary that as follows: "She may be healthy, handsome, and a delight to her husband." Lundberg's seemingly flippant, but interesting point about income security in today's economy would then be doubly well-taken.

Each government department and social agency seems to have its own pet poverty indicators; the three most

widely used have been mentioned earlier, as have the two basic approaches to defining poverty — the absolute approach and the relative approach.

Under the absolute approach, a certain standard of living is assumed to be a basic requirement and the cost of attaining that standard of living is budgeted. If you make less than the budgeted figure, you're poor. The poverty line under this approach can be updated by applying cost-of-living adjustments to the budget figure. This is basically the approach used by Statistics Canada. It observed that (in 1961) a family on average spent 50 per cent of its income on the bare essentials (food, clothing and shelter), and therefore decided, somewhat arbitrarily, that spending more than 70 per cent of one's income on these necessities constitutes "straightened circumstances," or poverty. It is through this approach that Statistics Canada makes the statement that one in four families in 1961 were poor, and one in eight families in 1973 (632,760 of Canada's 5,273,000 families) were poor.

The Economic Council of Canada's well-known poverty study is one of many that uses this approach. It has been criticized, however, for not taking into account the view that, as the standard of living of the population at large improves, as it has, so should the standard of living of the poor.

The second, or "relative," approach to defining poverty makes an attempt to deal with the basic criticism. Under the relative approach, poverty is defined as having an income which is a certain amount less than the average of that of society at large, or in other words, in terms of an income short-fall from prevailing community standards.

The Canadian Council on Social Development (C.C.S.D.) uses a relative approach in defining poverty: It draws its poverty lines by establishing an average family income for each size of family, and determining that any family making half or less the average income for its size is poor.

Statistics Canada, using the absolute approach, would declare a family of four poor in January 1975 if its annual income were \$5,877 or less. The Canadian Council on Social Development would make that figure \$7,028. The Senate Committee on Poverty, in its own variation of the second, or relative, approach, would arrive at a figure of \$7,871.

Thus David P. Ross's "likelihood" figures — his statistics showing that female-headed families are almost five times as likely to be poor as male-headed families, and that families have two out of five chances of being poor simply by virtue of being female-headed — are based on the most conservative, least generous "poverty line" definitions in use in Canada. It is frightening to imagine what Ross's "likelihood" figures might jump to, had he been able to work with the C.C.S.D. or Senate Committee indices. Ross himself notes, in a preface to his "likelihood" tables that, based as they are on the Statistics Canada "subsistence poverty lines" as Ross calls them, his figures give a picture of only the hardest-core poverty.

"THE POOR WON'T WORK" MYTH

Contrary to another commonly held supposition, most poor people — including poor women — do work. The Fifth Annual Review of the Economic Council of Canada (1968) tells us that three-quarters of all poor

families have one or more wage earners, and two-thirds of all poor families obtain most of their income from working.

The Department of National Health and Welfare's figures show that people do not *choose* welfare to avoid working. Forty-one per cent of welfare recipients are permanently disabled; 26 per cent are mothers caring by themselves for dependent children; nine per cent are aged; eight per cent are temporarily disabled; and three per cent are working poor getting income supplements. Only 13 per cent, therefore, are immediately employable, and of this group, 54 per cent are victims of economic layoff; 11 per cent lost jobs through strikes or lockouts; 13 per cent, through pregnancy or other family emergencies; 11 per cent were fired for miscellaneous reasons; and 11 per cent quit their jobs. This is 11 per cent of the original 13 per cent, so in fact, only 1.43 per cent of the total welfare population actually voluntarily quit working — and who is to say how valid their reasons might have been? One fact does emerge clearly, however: The vast majority of the population, male and female, would prefer to work than to receive welfare, *given a real choice*.

The key to the single mother's plight, however, is that she is treated, in the entire social structure and in all the assumptions of the social welfare system, as not having such a choice. Having dependent children to raise singlehandedly is seen, even by the most concerned and liberal administrators of the system, as cause for eliminating that choice for the woman. Entire booklength reports* on ways to help get welfare

*Barry B. Swadron's report to the Ontario Ministry of Social and Family Services, on the findings of his Task Force on Employment Opportunities for Welfare Recipients is one noteworthy example.

recipients back to work dismiss single mothers out of hand, although they are among the largest group of people on social assistance. Such mothers are simply categorized as “unemployable” by virtue of their status as single mothers.

The whole concept of family benefits, or mother’s allowance, is allegedly designed to *permit* the woman without a male breadwinner to stay at home to raise her children. In theory, mother’s allowance and so on give the woman a *choice* — she can stay home and collect it, or work to support her family, whichever she prefers.

However, although the level of welfare payments guarantees her a life of poverty if she chooses that route, if she does enter the work force — with its attendant expenses for child care, transportation costs and the like — she *still* has less than a 50-50 chance of ever breaking out of poverty. Furthermore, that statistical chance is for the female work force at large; the lower education and training levels of single mothers, compared with those of women at large, decrease her chance of breaking out of poverty even further. The so-called *choice* of the 63 per cent of single mothers who did not work, according to the 1971 census, looked at in this light, seems less of a free choice based on devotion to the duty of child rearing than many boosters of the family-benefits concept would have us believe.

REGIONAL AND SPECIAL FACTORS

All of the foregoing is not intended to suggest that the status of single mother is the sole factor determining whether a woman is disadvantaged. There are as many kinds of disadvantaged, or poor, women as there are

wrinkles in the fabric of the Canadian economy. However, some characteristics of the nation’s economy in particular create pockets of disadvantaged women.

In areas where mining and the pulp and paper industry predominate, for instance, there are vastly more job opportunities for men than for women if one accepts traditional job roles. The wife whose husband’s job lands her in such an area is at a distinct disadvantage in finding a job of her own, either to supplement the total family income or to support the family if her husband is injured or if her marriage breaks up. Barb raised her children in Sudbury and tells how she was able to bring the family above the poverty line only when they finally moved to Toronto where she was able to train as, and later become, a teacher.

“My husband went from being a hardrock miner to living off compensation off and on,” she said. “I’d always expected I’d work, but the whole time the kids were little I could never get work that was worth the trouble, given the expense of babysitters and the pressures on Ron. I always thought that if he’d felt better about his work and hadn’t been laid up so often, I wouldn’t have been so tied to the house and kids. Maybe we should have moved to Toronto sooner, but you know, when he wasn’t laid up, the money was okay sometimes.”

On both coasts, one-industry fishing towns employ women in canning and fast-freezing plants, in jobs that complement those of their husbands. But both jobs are extremely low paying, and often two breadwinners still can’t drag the family above the poverty line, given the occasional nature of the work and the precarious state of the industry generally. In times of adversity, alternate employment is scarcely available.

"I'd never move to Toronto," one such woman said of her life. "I visit my daughter and have relatives in Scarborough, but they're coming back. I've always worked, and since I had to leave my husband I've been lucky; I always found something. I work as a cook now. But what could I do in the big city, someone like me? I'd be scared to try."

Farm women are another group whose special circumstances make them disadvantaged by most economic definitions — although they are spared some of the humiliations of the urban poor. In the 1871 Census, 55 per cent of Canadians were in agriculture; less than 10 per cent are farmers today. The small family farm is no longer typical, and in fact, rural women are less and less often farm women — they are simply women who live outside big cities.

Traditionally, rural women could do work on a family farm which qualified them as contributors to the family's overall economic situation, if not as direct wage earners. Where family farms survive now, and they are declining steadily, it is usually because of the unpaid work of women. According to the federal Labour Department's Women's Bureau, 65.3 per cent of women employed in the agricultural sector in 1972 were unpaid family-farm workers, compared with only 14.8 per cent of men. The approximate annual income of \$4,000 for the average farm family certainly suggests that most of this special group of workers live below the poverty line. Nor is farming any longer seen as a solution to poverty.

The days when a woman could assure herself a secure, if hard-working, life by setting her cap for a farmer are long gone, although this was a major option open to

the impoverished woman two generations ago. Now the rural wife is likely to live her life the way Myra of Thunder Bay does: "We moved way out here to get a piece of land we could afford. Our house isn't real modern, but it's ours and no one can throw us out. My husband can still drive to his job in an hour — when he has one, and isn't on compensation for his back, or in Toronto for another operation. And if it wasn't for having our own eggs and vegetables I could never have fed us all, all these years."

Immigrant women, too, represent a segment of the population with special disadvantages. Many work illegally, usually at far less than the minimum-wage laws allow, and appear in no statistics. Labour unions are unable to even guess at their numbers, although union officials in Montreal and Toronto are certain they number in the thousands.

Much of the work these women in particular, as well as large numbers of Canadian-born women, perform for pay constitutes an extension of the housewife role and is scarcely visible economically. Taking in babysitting, and working as household domestics, are the two most immediately obvious such extensions of "women's role" into the lower rungs of the work force. Usually such women combine these jobs with other solutions to their financial plight.

For instance, Maria and Angela, two sisters in an extended Italian family in the north end of Montreal, told of how they work alternatively. One works in a knitting factory, while the other looks after both sets of children. They switch roles annually. Neither can stand being "just a housewife," either economically or emotionally as a permanent state; nor can they fulfil

their family duties in addition to the pressure of low-paid factory work for more than a few seasons at a time. (One's husband is on workmen's compensation; the other is a low-paid non-unionized construction worker.)

Both women are putting all their earnings toward the eventual purchase of their own homes. Both process virtually the entire family food supply in their basements, canning vegetables and fruit, making wine, even slaughtering much of the meat. Language prevents the two from getting any more than a gruelling minimum-wage job, but they have combined ingenious shortcuts to almost miraculously acquire property although both total family incomes are well below the poverty line.

It is noteworthy that both have relatives living in the home to help defray their mortgages. Co-operation within an extended family seems to be the most common way of surviving at the poverty line in immigrant communities.

Racism sometimes limits other sections of the immigrant community more drastically. Many West Indian women claim that it is difficult for them to get anything but domestic work. One West Indian community leader in Toronto said that even the community itself has no idea how many of their number are actually working this way since — like the “illegal” work welfare women have to do to supplement their income, women with insecure immigrants' status are very often motivated to work secretly, and under worse conditions than would otherwise be the case.

Similar instances of discrimination have been documented against native women in many parts of the country, as well.

What discrimination based on racism often means to women of minority groups is that their “equality” needs are so closely tied to the general “equality” needs of their disadvantaged community as a whole, that their “women's rights” needs become secondary. Indian women's organizations for equality, for instance, emphasize the right, and the means, to develop basic family-life needs; these requirements are still a greater priority for them than training for well-paying jobs.

Even a trained Indian woman, however, may have to face the hazards of racial discrimination. In a study for the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, for example, James Lotz found that in many geographic areas “if a white girl takes a job and leaves, she is considered an unfortunate exception; if an Indian girl does this, she is judged primarily as a representative of an ethnic group.” He catalogued instances where high schools deliberately slotted large numbers of Indian girls into training courses in hairdressing (this presumably being a suitably menial occupation for such women). Subsequently, however, it was found that the girls so trained were still unable to get jobs as hairdressers, although large numbers of vacancies in the field existed. (The only conclusion Lotz could reach was that those who were seeking to hire hairdressers were practising outright discrimination against Indians in their hiring practices.)

Without ignoring such “double jeopardy” situations for doubly disadvantaged women, we should still focus on what most disadvantaged women share — discrimination in hiring and training, and the lack of child care and other services that would give her a truly “free choice” in the economy.

IS THERE ROOM?

Is there room at all for the disadvantaged woman in the Canadian economy?

Canada Manpower, for one instance, is not geared to treat her situation as a top priority. Manpower officials in several cities have admitted privately that the priorities for eligibility for most of its retraining programs are as follows: men with dependents, men without dependents, and only then women with dependents, and women without dependents. The rationale, they say, is that the woman with dependents has the option of welfare — although welfare, it has been pointed out, is in theory something she is free to choose or not to choose.

A waitress in Thunder Bay told us, for example: "It was Manpower got me to come here from Kenora so I could make something better of myself; that was their words, make something better of myself. I took six months at the community college, in a course for waitresses, and here I am now, a waitress at the minimum wage. What did I need all the moving and the training for, I'd like to know."

In another city, three women told us about another alleged "retraining course" in institutional management, so-called: "Yeah, that's what they called it, but you know what it was? We never got no *training* at all — at least not what you or I would think of as training, no classes or teaching or nothing. What we got was the chance to do all the heavy spring-cleaning at the men-

tal hospital. And don't think it was for the minimum wage because it was for a lot less. The janitors got the minimum wage, and we got a lot less than they did. And when the spring-cleaning was all done, that was the end of our training course, and there wasn't even a regular job at the end of it all."

One confidential survey done for the federal government and not made public indicated widespread discrimination against women in Manpower programs and in the attitudes of Manpower officials.

Many women blamed Manpower for actively discouraging single mothers from seeking training. They said the agency's officials had often suggested to them retraining would be a waste of time and resources since they would only marry again. One federal Department of Labour official suggested in an interview that the only real long-term solution to the economic plight of these women lies in extensive retraining in professional and other well-paying jobs — *not* in traditional "women's work" such as typing, which tends to be low-paid because it is women's work.

However, this official seems to be in a decided minority. Several women we interviewed complained that Manpower officials "slot" them into courses in hair-dressing — which usually lead to low-paying dead-end jobs that, while they can be useful to single women or wives acting as second breadwinner, simply don't pay enough to make it worth the while of a single mother to abandon welfare. One young mother told of asking to be trained as a marine navigator — a course the Centre offered which appealed to her — and having the male Manpower official across the desk burst into laughter.

INCENTIVES

It is difficult to escape the conclusion — after reading countless pages of reports, spending hours in discussion with government and social-agency officials, and hearing the stories of women themselves — that real incentives for single mothers on welfare to re-enter the work force are just not taken seriously as something worth providing.

A multitude of official and semi-official documents, it is true, attests to increasing concern over the general problem of the lack of an adequate income for all Canadian families, and the more specific aspect of this problem created by the disproportionately large number of mother-led families among those with inadequate incomes. The Canadian Council of Social Development, in 1969, issued a sympathetic, and comprehensive, policy statement on the subject. In 1970 no fewer than three major government-sponsored reports examined the question further: the federal government's White Paper on Income Security, the Report of the Québec Commission on Health and Social Welfare, and (perhaps the most widely publicized) the long-awaited Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. In 1971 came the Senate Special Committee on Poverty report, *Poverty In Canada*, as well as the National Council of Welfare's policy statement and call for a guaranteed annual income.

In 1973 the federal Department of National Health and Welfare published its so-called "orange paper", or Working Paper on Social Security in Canada — self-

described as Ottawa's "contribution to the launching" of a joint federal-provincial review of the concept of income security and the existing social security system in Canada.

Among the orange paper's several general propositions are some suggestions that a government-provided income supplement ought to, as one of its features, "provide some advantage to the single parent families...who choose and are able to earn income from work"; that a guaranteed-income system should have "built-in work incentives"; and that it should "remove any disincentives which may exist to discourage people who are on social assistance from taking advantage of the training and employment opportunities available to them". And these general principles have been retained as working principles in the ongoing federal-provincial review of social security launched by the orange paper.

The orange paper, it should be remembered, however, is simply (in its own words) an "outline" of "broad directions of policy" which the federal government thinks would be nice, *not* "a set of fixed proposals" and emphatically not "a prescription or a panacea for every weakness in Canada's welfare system." More significantly, its main thrust, and the main thrust of most of the documents listed above that led up to it, is still to think generally of welfare mothers in this category: "people whose incomes are insufficient because *they are unable or are not expected to work*, namely the retired or disabled, *single parent families*, and people who are not presently (sic) employable by reason of a combination of factors such as age, lack of skills..." (The words are from the orange paper's Proposition #7; the italics are mine.)

Any major attitudinal change toward welfare mothers—from the policy-makers at the top to the middle- and lower-level bureaucrats who administer the policies in the communities of Canada — that might lead to serious attempts to tackle the question of work incentives does not appear to be on the horizon.

Most bureaucrats simply state that welfare mothers don't want to work anyway. The more reactionary ones make the statement in a way that suggests they themselves are lazy and unmotivated; the ones who see themselves as liberal and humane stress the honourable status of homemaking as woman's real profession. But all seem to take for granted that their charges are making the same free choice to stay home with the kids, as the middle-class housewife. The facts show this is not so.

"Family Benefits Mothers in Metropolitan Toronto," a 219-page document published by the Ontario government in 1973, reports the results of a survey on the question this way:

"Mothers on welfare who were neither aged nor permanently disabled were asked whether, given a choice, they would prefer to stay at home and look after the kids themselves, or to take a job outside the home. Sixty-nine per cent prefer to stay home and take care of their children."

However, as in most such studies, the vague phrase "given the choice" is not elaborated. What with the almost complete inaccessibility to day care that these mothers face, not to mention the pervasive image of day care in this country as nothing more than a babysitting service rather than an enriching experience for a

child — and what with the unlikelihood that these women will ever get a job that would give them a greater net take-home income than their welfare benefits — it is obvious that most of the respondents were unable to conceive of "a choice" that would not be pretty grim.

The document continues: "Among those who would be willing to go out and work, the requirements they set down are pretty stiff. Fifty-three per cent volunteered that they would need a good babysitter, 51 per cent said sufficiently good wages, 46 per cent said better clothing, 37 per cent would need transportation to work . . . This works out to an average of two requirements for each mother. They are demanding!"

Any suspicion that this style of writing is just someone's slightly tasteless sense of humour is, unfortunately, dispelled by continued reading of the report. With attitudes such as this on the part of officials — that decent child care and a living wage constitute "stiff," "demanding" requirements on the part of someone entering the labour force — it is little wonder that welfare mothers have seen no large-scale programs that could possibly be successful in getting them back to work.

The one survey we encountered in which the questions were constructed in a more realistic, less "stacked" fashion was done in confidence for one agency concerned with welfare and produced quite different results.

It found a mixture of opinion on whether mothers with pre-school-aged children wanted to work, but a greater propensity toward the idea once children reached

school age. (The Ontario government report, on the other hand, dismisses the age of children as a factor affecting opinion; it said this produced little variation in the responses.) When children reached the age of 11, opinion swung decidedly toward working. A vast majority saw the provision of day-care services as helpful in getting a mother back to work — when the possibility of such services was suggested to them. Retraining was seen as the second most important such service. The report noted with surprise that higher-income people saw retraining as more helpful than lower-income people. It would seem likely from conversations with the women themselves, that this is probably because lower-income people are more likely to have had direct experiences with existing inadequate retraining programs, and are less able to envision such programs functioning the way they ought to ideally.

Unpublished material commissioned by a federal-provincial welfare study group reveals data that tend to give further lie to the suggestion that female welfare recipients want to stay home. Only 31.8 per cent of them, when surveyed, listed their occupations as “homemaker.” Nine per cent called themselves white-collar workers; four per cent were in sales; 10.7 per cent were skilled labourers; and 32.9 per cent, unskilled labourers. Mothers with dependent children they may be — in fact, *are*, in the main — but stay-at-home mothers they were obviously *not*. When they had the greater options provided by a male breadwinner, a good many more had chosen to work than to stay home with their children. The obvious conclusion is that, without two incomes in the family, the expenses of working (notably child care) came too high for the choice to be a real choice anymore.

It has been convincingly argued that, to stay above the poverty line, a woman with children requires not less (which is what she gets) or even the same as a man with dependents, but a good deal more. Unlike a man, she cannot get a wife to do for free what she has been raised to do. Obviously it would be financially impossible for the vast majority of women to contract out all the services that a wife provides in what the socio-statisticians call an “intact family.”

Increasingly, women are looking to governments to provide these services. Some go in the direction of advocating direct pay to women for performing these services, with such slogans as “wages for housework.” Other longer-range thinkers call for increases in government spending and priorities for social services that would free women from the burdens that make it impossible for her to compete as a free agent in the labour force.

“Since we expect the woman alone with dependent children to perform adequately the roles of both father and mother we must make it possible for her to do so. The woman alone must be given an opportunity to achieve economic independence. With this end in view we must formulate policies and encourage attitudes that enable her to do so. She must receive the support and co-operation of the community through retraining programs and enhanced employment opportunities, through supporting services such as day-care centres, latch-key programs, mother’s help when necessary, employment opportunities that are geared to fit into her family responsibilities. Adequate counselling, adequate legal advice and a greater public awareness of her social and economic position are all necessary.”

The above quotation is from a brief to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women by June Menzies for the Working Group on the One-Parent Family. Despite a growing body of public opinion in favour of its sentiments, women today are no closer to achieving its demands than they were in 1967, when the brief was prepared.

CONCLUSION

The concept of family benefits is based on the idea of the state taking over from the absent "man of the house," and filling his role as sole provider for the family, while the mother fills hers as solely homemaker and custodian of children.

But the facts do not support this assumption.

Only about three in ten welfare mothers were in fact "homemakers" before circumstances forced them to go on family benefits. If the state were really interested in taking over from the absent man of the house, it might consider providing a *second* income (or income supplement) which, combined with the wife's earnings, would enable the family to at least try to lift itself out of poverty. This, the statistics show, is the way seven out of 10 of these families were living when they had a real male provider instead of a state surrogate.

Occasional government pilot projects have recognized this reality to some extent. A federally funded program called Vancouver Opportunities in 1970 attempted to deal with the problem of retraining welfare mothers without forcing them to lose the security of welfare while re-entering the work force.

More recently, "Mincome Manitoba," a federally and provincially financed program in that province has experimented with the "negative income tax" concept. A control group of 1,500 poor families in Winnipeg, as well as the entire town of Dauphin, (400 miles northwest of Winnipeg) has been receiving income supplements since November 1974 in what is intended to be a three-year experiment (with a one-year phase-out at the end).

The intent of the program is to determine the effects of a guaranteed income on all types of families — but one side result will be to measure whether welfare mothers, given economic security, do indeed attempt to retrain themselves and enter the work force. (Program officials say that it has not been in effect long enough yet for any conclusion either way to be drawn).

Programs like these, however, are still seen very much as daring social-scientific experiments, "pilot projects" rather than actual ways of doing things. They are seen at the top, for the most part, as interesting variations on the existing welfare system that might — if successful — suggest ways that the existing system could be tinkered with, to make it more successful at large.* There is not yet any philosophic recognition that the state's stepping in to take the place of the "man of the house" might mean providing a mother-led family with

*This attitude is expressed best, perhaps, in the preface to the federal government's 1973 Working Paper on Social Security in Canada (the so-called "orange paper"), which concludes: "It must not be thought . . . that the launching of a critical review such as this is a sure sign that Canada's present social security system is fundamentally unsound, and in need of a total transformation. For this simply is not the case. The truth is that Canada's system is one of the most advanced in the Western World, and that is provides a solid foundation upon which to build in the context of today's needs."

the second income that more and more working-class families survive on.

Official literature, however, is coming closer to this view — at least occasionally. Witness the conclusion drawn by Simon Fodden in the Spring 1974 edition of the “Bulletin of Canadian Welfare Law,” following a lengthy examination of the ramifications of rules about deserting husbands and child-support.

“Does the husband have to support his wife because he is somehow responsible for her plight?” Fodden asks. “In a sense he is responsible in that...while they were living together, she had no need to turn to the public purse. But in a broader, more meaningful sense her dependent situation arises from the fact that she is unable to work — and that is the fault of society at large...

“Insufficient education and skills training, insufficient job opportunities, insufficient salary, and insufficient day-care centres are the cause of the dependence. Society, having caused the problem, should bear the cost.”

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The following sources were used by the author during the preparation of this article. They may be of use to those who want to delve more deeply into the subject of the disadvantaged woman in Canada. This list does not, of course, pretend to be a complete, or even particularly exhaustive, compilation of all the material available on poverty in Canada. Nor are the works on it necessarily recommended in the conventional sense of the word; they are simply publications I found useful in one way or another. Some were good; some were useful precisely because they were so terrible. — M.D.

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THE YOUNG WOMAN

KATHERINE GOVIER



I'm not me yet,
but I'm getting there . . .

THE YOUNG WOMAN

KATHERINE GOVIER

When I was 15 I thought I knew everything. I'd never make mistakes and ruin my life the way so many people around me had. I'd have a fantastic career and never get married. I'd be a famous novelist, a star reporter, a member of Parliament. I scorned the caution offered by elders: I had a destiny to meet. But then something happened. My future grew more distant, not more near, as I grew older. My world closed around friends, boyfriends, the school hierarchy. In a haze of romance and heartbreak I finished high school and went on to university. I rocketed in and out of love, changed my program of studies, mourned, moped, moved, dropped in and out of jobs. At 22, exhausted, I married. I looked back on my 15-year-old self with cynical amusement. What a fool I'd been then, with my arrogance and surety. I didn't know what life was all about back then. Life is love, I thought, and love is compromise. Now, at 26, the haze is lifting. I try to retrace the thread of my talents and energies, to find the place where love and work begins. I want my 15-year-old self back. Maybe I *did* know everything.

I don't know a word for those ten years. Industrial society created adolescence, that increasing span of years during which children become adults. It used to happen fast. In tribal societies young men took a week in the bush to prove their manly prowess. And women, well, women grew up overnight, in a manner automatic and biological, by a mysterious flow of blood that signalled their readiness for wifery. Now, growing up takes ten or fifteen years, but the essential distinction between the sexes remains. For men, 'rite of passage' is functional: it means acquiring the skills to survive and support others. But what does it mean for women, what future skills are required; indeed, what future is in store? Mostly, between 15 and 25, women are waiting.

Sophistication and industrialization have complicated their immediate futures—the young woman may continue to study, train; she may work or travel, but even then she is putting in time until the right man comes along to install her in her own future as a wife and mother. Higher expectations for women have come to mean better education, a more fulfilling job, a more perfect mate, but it does not essentially alter her future role within society and the family. Her future is still in her biology.

For almost two decades now, families in Canada have educated their daughters almost equally along with their sons, out of pride, prosperity and a sense of fairness, but they still expect them to become wives and mothers. These daughters, now married and bearing children, are using their education to earn money and independence. Their learning and skills contribute not only to the family, but to themselves. Their personal interests are conflicting with the interests of the family and society at large. Many women of 30-plus are venturing out of their traditional patterns, leaving behind scrambling families, and society divided into two sectors, one cheering and the other booing. Daughters, sisters and other young females are witnesses, watching the action. They see roles for their future, but there are conflicts. There are no sure models to show her how to incorporate her disparate selves—her need for love, for security, and for meaning.

Sociologists are debunking the comfortable mythology that working-class people are free from "higher aspirations". Before young women realistically perceive their options, they too have ideals for self-fulfillment. The idea that they aim universally and solely to be wives and mothers should also be junked.

A naive girl sees her potential instinctively. She has to be *told* she will not be the prime minister or an astronaut. The very amount of energy that goes into this telling indicates that limited options are learned, not innate. We tell and tell and tell young women what they are made for. The astonishing thing is not how effective this conditioning is, but how many adolescent girls are immune to it. Monique, a 23-year-old French Canadian factory worker remembers, "Once I wanted to be an accountant. I was good with figures. Oh, I know now I never will be. It was just a dream." Caroline, a native 19-year-old, has learned, "I just take things as they are. If I dreamed I'd be disappointed."

Young women are full of imagination—many say they'll never marry, they'll travel, they'll soar. Foolish plans, perhaps, but plans are options, and options are freedom. Everywhere young women are letting go of their plans and their freedom. Something called reality, things as they are, 'the way it is' surrounds them, easing away their precious vision. You can almost see this ubiquitous letting go, a silent extinguishing, sometimes violent, sometimes so subtle it can't be named. Most of us say it doesn't happen at all. For dreams, as the song goes, "don't make no noises as they die."

Looking back, I see 'growing up' as something more like cutting oneself down to size, striking compromises as the fantasy of the grown-up self is brought down by the realities which define adulthood. Most of us, between 15 and 25, leave school, move out of our parents' home, establish sexual relationships and marry, and take a place in the working world. Money, sex, personal authority—those properties of grown-ups—are the compensations. They become our own. Our actions, opinions and roles cease to be extensions of parents,

teachers and peers. We take responsibility, mostly with reluctance, for the selves we are, or, as women, see that responsibility pass us by and rest with our husbands. And meanwhile we take what we can get from what is on hand, and get on with the business of living. For so many of us, however, the business of living falls tragically short of the dream, short of the capabilities and even the possibilities.

THE FACTS

The 1971 census says there are two million females in Canada between the ages of 15 and 24, with swelling in the younger group due to the postwar baby boom. Three-quarters of these women are "urban"—living in towns of population over 1,000, and one-quarter are rural. In 1972 about 40 per cent of them were in secondary school, and six per cent were in university. That leaves a little over 50 per cent—over one million young women—working, homemaking or in occupational training.

Born in a relatively large family (average almost four children), the young woman of today is a baby boom kid, whose parents were born and brought up in the dirty thirties, were teenagers during the war, married after it was over and settled into the oppressive 1950s as 'young marrieds'. If she is 18 today, this young woman was ten when student rebellion was news, six when Beatlemania struck and when her mother, teacher or a female relative may have read *The Feminine Mystique*. Beatniks were out and TV was in before she was born. She doesn't really remember Bob Dylan.

She will marry two years younger than her mother did, have one or two fewer children than her mother had.

She is almost twice as likely to work after marriage as her mother was, and is one-and-a-half times as likely to live in an urban centre as was her mother. On the average, she has more education than her mother, although statistics show that enrollment ratios of females in post-secondary education have remained relatively unchanged from the 1930s to the mid-sixties.⁽¹⁾

Even as a student, she is likely to work, at least part-time. Of all females aged 14 to 19, 37 per cent work, and of all females between 20 and 24, 63 per cent work. Sixty per cent of married women under 25 work. The greatest numbers of young women are in clerical and helping occupations, and their share of wages is lowest of any group.⁽²⁾ Young women are consistently

⁽¹⁾ Women made up 25 per cent of the total enrollment at bachelor and first professional level in universities in Canada in 1931; in 1964, the ratio had risen less than three per cent to 28 per cent. Between 1930 and 1967, women actually decreased as a percentage of the total enrollment in graduate studies: from 15.2 per cent (doctorate) and 21.4 per cent (masters) in 1930 to 7.6 per cent (doctorate) and 20.6 per cent (masters) in 1967. However, by 1973, women had finally overtaken their early numbers, making up 24 per cent of masters students and 19 per cent of doctoral students. *Perspective Canada* (a 1974 Statistics Canada publication) shows that women were 38.3 per cent of the total post-secondary enrollment in 1960-61, and 39.7 per cent of the total in 1971-72. This figure includes community colleges and CEGEPS. For university only, women accounted for 45.5 per cent of the total enrollment in 1971-72, an increase from 38.3 per cent in 1962.

⁽²⁾ Wages are not generally broken down by age of worker, but 30 per cent of all working women are now engaged in "clerical" work in offices. In 1974, the average bankteller's salary was \$5,800 per year, and a junior secretary in Nova Scotia made \$95 a week. An interesting fact to discover would be the average age of the bank teller and junior clerk, most of whom seem to be young women who are working until they marry or have children. In March 1974, 84 per cent of those in the Ontario civil service making less than \$6,000 a year were women, mostly doing clerking, typing and hospital service.

unemployed at higher rates than other groups, and 51 per cent of all unemployed females are between the ages of 14 and 24. And yet, married women under 25 work more consistently than other married women, because there is greater economic pressure to do so.

In 1971, about 30 per cent of our two million young women were married. In all marriages in 1972, three-quarters of the brides were between 14 and 24 years of age; one-quarter of these were *under* 20. The average age of marriage has been dropping steadily from 24.5 in 1940 to 22.6 years in 1971 in all Canada, (a year older in Québec and a year younger in Newfoundland). Many of these young marriages are doomed: In all divorces in 1972 the wife was under 20 in 44 per cent of cases. The average age of child bearing has also been dropping, from 30 in 1930 to just under 27 in 1971. However, most recent (and still incomplete) data indicate an upward shift in average age of child bearing. It is not clear whether this is an aspect of timing of births, made possible by 'the Pill' or if in fact it does mean a continuing trend toward declining "fertility" or births per woman of child-bearing age. The assumption is generally made that women are not ruling out children, but are putting the first one off, and therefore that this upward shift is temporary and will not interfere with the generally declining mean ages of fertility. Statisticians say that for the low fertility projections, 1.8 children per woman, 25 per cent of women would have to choose childlessness, and point to studies showing how North American women are still opposed to this state. In any case, the present young woman is expected to have between 1.8 and 2.6 children.

All of which tells only a little about the young woman. A census every ten years cannot keep up to the speed

with which youth's almost autonomous society takes on new behaviour. And statistics show only the effects of decisions, such as the sudden drastic decline in the birth rate in Québec in the late 1960s, leaving the reasons unexplained. As well, studies aiming to examine trends are often insensitive to women. For example, the Committee on Youth Report (1971) interprets the declining marriage age as an indicator of the increasing autonomy of youth. This hardly seems accurate for women: they married early in the 17th century, too. Their "increasing autonomy" would more likely be reflected in the numbers who move away from home to study, work or travel. The dropping marriage age belies increased freedom, for it is not necessarily a sign of independence, but perhaps more a sign of lack of options, the fact that to marry is still the only way for a woman to achieve mature status.

We do know, however, that youth culture, or what passes into the public imagination as such, is limited to highly visible youth in metropolitan areas and universities. Perhaps most young people continue to live unmodified by the culture-quakes of their age-groups, more alienated from their own supposed culture than from their parents'. "Home" may be the whole world, or it may be a place to escape from. Although in the 1970s regions, particularly the West, have held on to youth increasingly — still many must leave home to get work or education. And despite national media, easier transportation and mobility, one end of Canada is a long way from the other.

ANN, 18, came to Toronto four months ago with her twin sister, Anita, to find work. They finished high school in their native Newfoundland two years ago.⁽³⁾

My father is from a little tiny town that had six families, and he went to the hospital for a free meal and met my mother. Then they stayed there, and she quit work and had five kids in three years. This little street we lived on, it's a back road, and all of us on the street were related. All cousins. We had a terrific time as kids. But it gets to where you can't meet anybody, because you've known them all your life. And there aren't that many jobs. Everybody knows your business and it gets to be a real drag sometimes.

CHRISTINE, 19, is a native Indian living in Whitehorse.⁽⁴⁾

I've been outside, and I didn't like the cities. I like the north. I was out in the bush wrangling and I enjoyed that more than a holiday down south. I want to go to work in Inuvik in the hospital there. I don't think I'd like to live in my home town when I get married. My sister and every one of her friends live there still, married, but all of mine are gone. It's really bad for all the old biddies gossiping.

MONIQUE, 23, is French-Canadian and works in a Montreal zipper factory.⁽⁵⁾

⁽³⁾ Ann's and Anita's family income: approximately \$15,000 per year. Father's occupation: foreman with CPR. Mother's occupation: part-time nurse.

⁽⁴⁾ Christine's family income: approximately \$15,000 per year, for a family of 11 children. Father's occupation: heavy construction worker.

⁽⁵⁾ Monique's family income: approximately \$10,000 per year for a family of four. Father's occupation: truck driver. Mother's occupation (recent): sales clerk.

I was born in the Gaspé but my parents came to Montreal when I was one. My father was a truck driver and there was no work over there. Maybe my husband and I might go back to live in the country when we have children. I've been here 22 years, but I go back home on holidays, because all my relatives live there. I have also been to Niagara Falls, Old Orchard, and some other places but I can't remember names.

MYRA, 18, is a university student from a town of 600 in Nova Scotia.⁽⁶⁾

There isn't much to do at home on the weekends. There used to be a dance but they were cancelled because of fighting. There's a movie 40 miles away. Most of the girls study and listen to radio and TV and play records. Drinking is really a problem, starting from about 12 up, for both girls and guys. There's nothing else to do and they want to be in with the older kids, so they drink in cars and at dances. Some grow out of it but many don't. Many of my friends are heavy drinkers and have blackouts. It used to be not ladylike to drink, but now it's in for girls. Around our town, many girls drop out of school and marry older men. Of the girls I started with in grade seven, about one-quarter have dropped out, some at 14 and 15, and another one-quarter married right after high school. Most of the kids my age are falling into the same pattern their parents did, like in this fishing town 30 miles away, they all get married early and the husbands fish the same as their fathers did, and they'll have four or five kids.

EDITH, 18, is a high school student in Calgary.⁽⁷⁾

There's usually a party on the weekend, and kids drink a lot, they don't smoke up so much now. Or else my boyfriend and I go bowling or watch TV. We go downtown shopping for clothes on Saturdays, my friends and I. And I guess we see just about every new movie that comes to town. But it's pretty boring. There isn't much to do. Oh, a lot of kids ski on weekends, too, if they can afford it. Then you know lots of kids have part-time jobs on Thursday and Friday nights and all day Saturday, so they can make extra money and go out to pubs and stuff.

To what extent the supposed changes in consciousness affect young women, and what the effects of changes will be, no one knows. There is a growing notion that a conservative "backlash" to the rebellious 1960s is occurring in the high schools and universities. Although some youth attitudes, specifically to capital punishment, abortion, and material success, lend support to this theory, the overall picture seems to be much more complex. Economic, social and regional factors combine so that movements and counter-movements conflict, cancel each other out, or combine. An example is Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, a city of 10,000 which is one of the few places in the country where the 20- to 24-year-olds outnumber the younger group, mostly because of a migration north of young people from all over Canada. Whitehorse is known as a city for young people. Transients, idealists, teachers, and young capitalists from the Prairies, B.C., Ontario, and the Maritimes go up to work, buy land, or just to join in what is supposedly the most exhilarating

⁽⁶⁾ Myra's family income: \$7,000 per year. Father: deceased. Mother's occupation: houseworker, supplemented with Widow's Allowance.

⁽⁷⁾ Edith's family income: \$20,000 per year. Father's occupation: salesman. Mother's occupation: daycare worker.

social scene in the country—bars are full, and everyone's friendly. Meanwhile the locals, having gone to school in Whitehorse, save their money to travel "outside" to Mexico, Hawaii, Amsterdam, perhaps returning home to make the high temporary wages, take advantage of government-supported training, and also to get some of that land. The natives, who make up 50 per cent of the population, are at cross-purposes — some organizing to claim land themselves, but many travelling, working temporarily and frequenting the same bars, generally being pushed and drifting farther from the land and the trap lines as middle-class outsiders drift toward it. Achievement as we view it is an import—children of civil servants from outside may want it, but Yukoners see cash, material goods and freedom of movement as goals. Middle-class aspirations are just coming within the realm of the natives, while the white outsiders, having grown up on such values, systematically reject them. What is liberation and self-sufficiency to one woman—a diploma as a nurses' aid, for example—is the end of the line to another, who seeks her true identity in growing a garden or travelling. Although it is exaggerated in Whitehorse, this mixing and exchange of values is happening all over the country as incoming groups from within and outside Canada meet indigenous populations in Toronto, Vancouver, the Prairies.

Still, there have been some absolute changes in the past decade which must affect most young women in Canada. Perhaps the most significant is work — 62 per cent of all women between 20 and 24 years of age are in the labour force, an increase of 12 per cent over the previous decade, which itself represented only an increase of one per cent over the figure of the 1950s. Perhaps even more significant than this huge leap in numbers of working women, is the increase of "profes-

sionalism" among women, with the accompanying commitment to long-term jobs. Enrollment of women in law and medical faculties has tripled since the mid-sixties. A seldom-noted fact which bears on this increase in professionalism among women is the even greater increase in non-professional jobs for women. In 1900, only five per cent of working women were in clerical positions; now over 30 per cent of all working women are engaged in clerical work.

A second major change is of course the advent of the "Pill" and its promise of controlled pregnancy, or the option for *no* pregnancy. Also divorce rates have skyrocketed — they more than doubled between 1968 and 1969, and now stand at three times the 1968 rate. Single parenthood is on the increase. Experimental lifestyles, communes, singlehood — these are possible new directions. Will this generation of young women be different from their mothers, different from their older sisters?

OBSTACLES/OPTIONS

Gina, a 22-year-old non-status Indian woman with grade eight education, wants to train herself. She is divorced with one child and cares for two others through family obligations. From her one-room cabin on a settlement of 600 in the north, she took work as a guide cook, a job which required her to be away from home several weeks at a time. This was unsatisfactory for the children, and Gina's dream is to take the hair-dressing course at Yukon Vocational Institute which will give her a skill and indoor work in a nice place. Before she was eligible, though, she had to 'upgrade' herself for at least one year, meanwhile receiving \$200

a month from Manpower, caring for three children and waitressing at night. While she was in the midst of her upgrading, the hairdressing course she wanted was dropped at the Vocational Institute, and her Manpower counsellor cannot tell her why. Determined, Gina placed her name on a two-year waiting list for a hairdressing course in Nanaimo, and she'll get there.

Jean, a 20-year-old university student⁽⁸⁾ in her last year of a geography degree, developed anxieties which made it impossible for her to study. She dropped out of school, in a turmoil about her career, her boyfriend and herself. After receiving psychiatric help for a year, she re-entered university, dropped the boyfriend, graduated and got a job.

Edith, an 18-year-old grade 12 student at a Calgary high school faces a decision. She could go to university, but that would mean several years without much money and staying at home with her parents, which she finds increasingly difficult. She doesn't apply for any training, because she doesn't know what she wants, and thinks she'll probably work somewhere, maybe in a department store for a few years, while her boyfriend trains to be a policeman. She thinks they'll get married in a few years anyway.

Movements and legislation sink too slowly into society to alter the lives which are prescribed for most of us. Says Robert Nagge of the Centre of Human Relations Training at Sir George Williams University in Montreal, "It's not surprising that young women appear

unchanged. Until certain institutions are altered, namely the family as number one socializer and the schools as number two, there can be almost no change."

Not only do these two most important factors molding us not change with any facility, they are essentially opposed to change. Family and schools are the instruments to stabilize, to convey traditions over generations. Studies show that the Canadian family influences child rearing, mate selection, occupational placement and socialization into roles. The notion that family influence is declining is false; on the contrary, family ties and networks are expanding and strengthening. Interdependence among nuclear families is increasing, especially between the generations, through longer educational periods and financial support of the young by parents, and increased longevity and support of the old. Rebellion against one's family is short-lived in individuals. As Collette Moreux hypothesizes in an article on the French-Canadian family, "children and adolescents in spite of their apparent deliberate opposition to the models transmitted by adults, have themselves an unconscious attachment to values similar to their parents." Since the family as we know it is sexist, based as it is upon the role of woman as mother, wife and homemaker, it conveys limited options to girls.

ANITA, 18 years old, from Newfoundland is Ann's twin.

Back home it's all Catholic, very strict and moral. All of us say, okay, we're never going to be like that, but maybe we will anyway because of how we were brought up. We're influenced by our parents.

A 1968 study of high school students by Barbara Wand and Hyman Burshtyn revealed that a close identi-

⁽⁸⁾Jean's family income: \$30,000 per year. Father's occupation: lawyer.

cation with parents, in particular the father, appeared to lower a girl's desire to work outside the home. Girls were also more likely than boys to state that parents' views about what they should do after high school were the same as their own. This concurs with Nagge's belief that family influence is exerted two or three years longer over girls than boys. Dr. Cora Casselman, psychiatrist at Carleton University in Ottawa, observes that if the relationship with parents is good, a traditional pattern in parents — for example the husband a lawyer, the wife a nurse who quit work to raise the children — will be followed, perhaps modified slightly, by the daughter who will take responsibility for the family over her career as a nurse or educator. If the relationship with parents is bad, there is more chance that the daughter will rebel against the traditional structure.

Esther Greenglass illustrates that the influence varies with the ethnicity of families. Her study shows that in the Canadian family, the daughter perceives the mother as the primary agent for controlling her behaviour, and in the Italian family (resident in Canada), the father is perceived by her as occupying that role. And the father, even more than the mother, we have seen, expects traditional female behaviour from his daughter. Even where the family is not what it seems, where perhaps the mother is authoritarian and the father derelict, the visible form with father as head and breadwinner, mother as helpmeet, carries the weight.

As Moreux delineates in French-Canadian families, there is considerable deviation from the ideals of husband-wife roles and yet women "consciously cultivate the virtues of patience and resignation rather than face solitude and defy public opinion." Young women learn

to make such conscious compromises and to bow to public opinion early and continuously. And therefore, as Moreux states, "the family is tending to become functionally anachronistic, and yet manages to survive through some phenomenon of acquired strength."

The family, although far from ideal in actuality, is the pervasive myth of our society, representing love, support, security. Young women can barely fathom a future without this support. In their perceptions, to live unmarried would mean to live without security, a permanent mate, children, a house, material status and social acceptance. Alternative groupings simply are not visible to the majority. Small wonder so many young people, seemingly unconventional in other ways, marry and "settle down". Pressure to conform and marry is exerted by their own families, their peers and society at large. Freedom for women not to marry, and to have status, comfort and companionship as a single person, is still far from being a reality in this country. Even unhappily married parents urge their children to marry as if a decision by these people *not* to marry would put the final stamp of failure on the adult generation.

The only way out of the traditional family-begetting family is to adopt ways of living which are seen as radical, or at least odd, by most people. An educated middle-class minority rode the crest of the youth rebellion to communal living, back to the land, and unmarrieds on the ease of parental status which allowed them to temporarily ignore material success. But this alternative does not really exist for lower-class or isolated young people. If the current young are going to build a tradition of the two-career or non-sexist family, they will need a lot of help from government and em-

ployers. In the meantime, young women continue to grow and live in families, finding images of themselves in the relationships within these families. Mothers, fathers and siblings all play a part — my mother wants, my father thinks I should, my brother said...

MARIAN is a 15-year-old grade ten student in Vancouver.⁽⁹⁾

My father doesn't like me — he doesn't like anybody right now; he's really caught up trying to get something and he can't get it. He wants to start something new and he can't seem to do it. I think he resents me because I'm beginning to do the things I want to do and I'm achieving them. He doesn't approve of the way I act. I'd like to see what he'd approve of, here I am, I'm 15 and I'm a virgin. He never states the way I'm supposed to act. He does the same thing to my mother. She's having a really hard time, and she sits down and cries, but she doesn't want to say anything much to me because she thinks, Oh, she'll hate him even more, and he's my father.

There's really no relationship between me and my father right now. We have social workers coming in. We sit down and talk about problems, but it's me they're talking about. They have their own hassles, they're upset about other things, but it's me they talk about. It was agreed upon that the problem was Marian; get Marian out, the problem is solved. But the thing is they really know that the problem would not be solved. So, keep Marian in the house and they've got somebody to blame there.

Reinforced by the sexist myth that adult women cannot live within each other's territory, tension between mother and daughter rises as the daughter reaches puberty. Growing into adulthood is a transition for the daughter from one who benefits from a family where the mother is a servant of others' needs, to one who must serve. Young women may or may not take the overflow of the mother's work, but as they grow older the daughter's position moves toward that of the mother. Some young women see marriage as an escape, only to find that marriage makes the identification stronger. And while love for the mother may be very strong, there is also a powerful desire to be individual, not to become her.

SHIRLEY is an 18-year-old grade 12 student in Calgary.

I hate being at home now, because my mother asks me to do something and then she says no, you have to do it this way — her way. It would not be the same with my own house. I'd love to have a house and children myself; I want to get out of here. But I don't want to be old-fashioned with my kids.

CHRISTA is an 18-year-old separated mother on welfare in interior B.C.⁽¹⁰⁾

It became so that I was never Christa any more, I was Christa and Bill, mostly Bill. He'd get a job for a week, and he was smoking a lot of dope and drinking a lot of beer and sitting around the house and making me do all the housework and look after the kid and never doing anything for me. I was a little mother that ran around

⁽⁹⁾Marian's family income: approximately \$18,000 per year. Father's occupation: printer.

⁽¹⁰⁾Christa's family income: \$17,000. Father's occupation: master boiler-maker.

and looked after him and ironed his clothes and wiped his ass. Suddenly I just thought, I'm turning into my mother. What is this? I'm not going to this any more, I'm going to be me.

A largely unacknowledged, but alarmingly common form of victimization of young women is sex within the family. Brothers, uncles, fathers should they choose to exploit the situation, have access to powerless young women intimidated by the taboos of “incest” into silent acquiescence. The father in particular has tremendous power which, if abused, can virtually destroy the forming sexual identity of a young woman.

MARIAN

In grade seven, my father took me aside and gave me a great sex talk, basically he was telling me not to do it. I found out about sex by reading a book. My friend and I went to a library and sat there and read books, and we found out that my friend was raped when she was little, by the paper boy. She didn't know it, it was just one of those things in the back of your mind that comes out. My father, well, when I used to do something wrong, in the morning or at night he was always wearing his pyjama tops, he'd come trucking out and somehow get me on the floor and he'd stand there and yell at me and demand that I look up at him. It's not one of your nicest introductions to the male sexual organ. The first time I talked about that, in a consciousness-raising session, I was crying and crying. I don't know if he does it on purpose, he just doesn't bother to get dressed. If he does it again, I've made up my mind I'm going to beat him up. My brothers and uncles sort of do the same thing. When the family gets together and they talk about sex, it's a rude thing. When an uncle sticks his hand down my pants, it's considered a joke. My mother says they do it to her, too, and just to let them off easy.

Such a family situation is a prison, for rebellion makes you a “problem child” and vulnerable to other punitive measures by society.

MARIAN

Like I can't get out of the house without my parents' consent, and they realize if she goes, that means we're bad parents. The thing is, it's not that bad, it's a normal situation, only I'm not taking it. I told my father I'm going to sue him, I don't see why I can't, every divorce law in the world I could use. But Children's Aid isn't for kids, they want to keep the family together.

If Marian's case is ‘normal’, Christa's was extreme, and yet, its basis is not freakish, but merely an outgrowth of a male powerful/female subservient structure. The story is uncannily like that of another Canadian woman, Claire Martin, as she described in her book *In an Iron Glove*.

CHRISTA

My grandmother was French from Québec and my father moved here when he was about 12 years old and didn't speak any English. You would not believe it, when he comes home from work he sits in a chair and my mother takes off his shoes and bathes his feet. He sits there all night, and he has a little bell beside him to ring for her.

I wasn't allowed to wear a brassiere, I wasn't allowed to go out with boys, I wasn't allowed to wear makeup. It was really embarrassing, being the only girl in my class without a brassiere. I think my father's a sex maniac — he used to pinch my nipples and stuff. My mother always used to let him do it, too. He was strict — the

neighbours called him a slave driver. We had this huge garden and my sister and I worked in the garden all day long. My mother always said we got paid for it, we got a roof over our heads and food in our mouths. It's really a drag because when you're a parent that's what you're expected to do. I don't think a child should have to earn that. The awfulest thing that ever happened to me was when we would play this game. My father would pull me over the verandah rail and my legs would fall apart and he'd say things to me like, take your pants off, let me stick my finger in, and paw at me and my mother would give me dirty looks. I was 12, I ran to my room crying and my mother came in and said "You should have let him do it, he was just kidding!" I couldn't tell anybody. He used to say, if anything gets beyond this house, you're really going to be in trouble. My mother always used to say he was going to kill me.

I was contemplating running away from home from the time I was ten. What made me have the courage was Bill. I was really in love with him. He wasn't allowed to come over, and I hadn't seen him for about a month and then my parents had a big fight and my father beat my mother up. I got up the next morning and left them a note. I was 15 years old. My parents wanted to put me in reform school because I was unmanageable, I was a slut. I had to go live with Bill and his parents. Everyone was pressuring me to go home, the welfare. We'd all go to meetings and sit around in a circle and I'd say what happened to the psychiatrist and my mother would start to cry and say, "Oh Christa, you know that isn't true." And I'd freak out, because it was true and my mother was lying. The welfare people didn't believe me because my father was this respectable, hard-working man with this lovely wife who stays home and looks after him, these nice children that go to school

and get high marks, how could this be happening? Finally I went to another psychiatrist and he said, this girl isn't crazy, these things really happened to her.

Then I got pregnant. Getting pregnant saved me from everything. I don't even know if I did it deliberately or not. I know exactly where and when. When Bill broke the news to his mother she said, Oh God, it didn't happen here, did it? She said, that little slut, that child will never be a grandchild of mine. My father said I could get married if I went home for three weeks and made up for all the work I'd missed in the time I'd been away. I went home and did an incredible amount of work. My father said, Christa owes that to us, she shamed us.

At the wedding, I wore a veil and a white dress, and everyone was oh so proud of me. My father was being so contradictory, like I had shamed him, and then suddenly I was his little girl and I was getting married to this fine young man. I was 15 and I thought I knew so much. I was about to set out on my life, and I believed in the trip about security and being loved; somebody actually loved me and was going to love me for the rest of my life. It turned out to be pretty much of a farce.

Even when parents have the best intentions in guiding their daughters, the family structure which implies "ownership" and "responsibility" on the part of the parents leads to the common situation where it is the parents' own interests that dominate, for their own acceptance may depend on the conventional behaviour of their growing children. Many young people take jobs, marry, return home from travelling or make other decisions so that their parents will not be hurt...

ANN

Dad treated me like an adult, like I could sit down and drink with him. He says well, if you don't get married what're you going to do? He can't see, because he's not educated, he's only got grade six. He thinks a girl is supposed to get married and have kids. He wants to be a grandfather. I know what Dad wants for us, but I don't know what Mom wants. Dad says, everytime he has a beer with us, "Play the game, just play the game." He means play the game of life right, and every time you go out with a guy let him know that you're the boss. "I know," he says, "because I was a young feller myself, too."

CHRISTA

I did really well in school, while I was in school. I got As. My Dad wanted me to be a working girl with a family, and eventually when I was about 25 get married and live in a big house, and have lots and lots of grandchildren for him. Boy, I really blew it, didn't I?

MONIQUE

My father wanted me to finish high school and work in an office. But I was just like him, I didn't like school and I quit. I didn't want to work in an office anyway.

The young university student, Myra, is the exception, an example of how a parent with limited resources and experience can, through her treatment and encouragement of her daughter, allow her the choice of a life which would otherwise not be within her reach. Myra is the only one of 36 high school graduates from her school who actually is attending university, although four others are at teacher's college.

MYRA

My father died ten years ago and my mother raised me and my two brothers on widow's allowance. She does housework, too, to help. She has a grade eight education, but she reads a lot and is interested in current events. She really believes in education. She always let me make my own decisions. When I first mentioned to my friends that I wanted to go into radio, they thought I'd gone bonkers. They said, that's not for a woman. I think they associated it with acting, and it was sort of daring, because a woman should be either a teacher, a nurse, or a secretary. So after a while, instead of saying I'd like to go into radio, I said I'm going into radio.

My mother wouldn't be ashamed if I were "an old maid". She's different from most mothers. She says marriage isn't all it's cracked up to be and she isn't looking for grandchildren. She never wanted me to be a beauty queen, or really popular. My friend was the smartest person in the school; she even won the \$500 scholarship to go to university, but she didn't do anything. She decided to get married right after high school and she doesn't even work now. Her mother was so proud she was getting married. All the mothers brag about their daughters' boyfriends and their diamond rings, but not mine.

The major responsibility for the formation of the ego can be laid at the altar of the family, and expectations for the future are one of the ways the family conveys self-image to the daughter. Parents teach a son that his life, no matter what it will be, will be his own and will be lived through — a failure, a success, a disappointment to his parents or not — *on his own efforts*. To that end are devoted his skills and his strength. He grows into himself. A daughter is different. Her future hangs

on the question of who will she marry. Her life will be segmented by marriage. She may perhaps disappoint her parents *most of all* by choosing the wrong man to tie her life to, by making a poor choice for another defining structure to replace her family. She sees that her learning and her growth are almost irrelevant to her future, for she will discover her true self in the “accident” of love and marriage. With this split between accomplishment and reward, the core of her ego is fragmented. She learns through her family that as her role and status change, so does her self — eloquently symbolized by the change in name at marriage. A daughter is intimidated by her mother’s other self as a girl — the idea that mother was not always a mother being impossible to accept. One self wipes out the previous. A woman is not taught to see her future as a direct flow from her aims and actions: if a young girl wants a split-level home and two cars, she does not decide to earn the money for them; she sees that she will have to forge a self to attract the kind of man who will provide these things. The culture encourages her to manicure her nails, buy clothes and make-up as a means of acquiring a man with the status and goods she desires, not to actively strive to earn that status. Her energy is then deflected, and so her life starts and stops, breaks and reforms, over “love” relationships as a search for identity.

The “male” assumption that his life is a thing he chooses for himself is perhaps no more realistic than the “female” assumption that life is something made for her. Yet males surface with an ego which is self-sustaining and lifelong, and women do not. Even women who have high expectations often emerge from adolescence with conflicting and unrealistic desires for the future. Wand and Burshtyn’s study shows clearly

what we all know — that for girls, educational aspirations are related significantly to stated preferences with regard to marriage and family. For boys, there is no such relationship. Their study also clarifies that girls with higher abilities and aims are less realistic about their futures, expecting perhaps to have many children, full careers and traditional marriages. Hence they are more prone than others to failure and disappointment.’

Such a woman is characterized, as the women at the University of British Columbia who compiled *Voices of Women Students* discovered, by a lack of ability to project into the future, even to the next five years. Even when engaged in professional training, these women could not see themselves as eventually self-supporting, and expected to make decisions in conjunction with other factors. Of course. Unless she has already made the difficult decision to live for herself only — namely single and without children — she cannot “plan” what is not in her control, namely her marriage, and her husband’s decisions. A young man has no such inhibition about his planning (and is able to project into the future with greater assurance, according to the studies) because wives and children will attach themselves to his life plans, not detract from them. If the freedom to be self-determined is true liberation, then it is a long way off. For it is exactly this learned ability to compromise to “reality” that inhibits change in women. In other words, whether women learn young to compromise their desires, or whether they refuse that and learn only through painful experience that their options are limited, *most* come eventually to accept the situation. They realize that in our society, they *can’t* have everything a man can — a spouse, a career, a family, mobility, status and opportunities.

One way this lack of self-determination shows up in young women is through their desire to be “flexible”. Many choose secretarial training over forestry because they think it will make them more flexible, a general B.A. over a specialty because then they can decide to do something else, a short-term plan over a long-term one, because “you never know”. It becomes a passive acceptance of the way things are in order to make the most of opportunities which might come along — and more, it becomes an inability or great reluctance to commit oneself to anything.

ANN

Two years ago when I finished grade 11, I went to work in a small office that sells Mercedes. I had an apartment in the city for a while but then I moved home. Now I work for the government. Thursday I came into town, Friday I went to Manpower, Monday I went for the interview. They were just hiring Clerk 1, so it was that or nothing, and I did have experience. But they showed me the benefits of working here and I thought, it's something you can put your lifetime into, it's a career for you, really. You can transfer, you see, anywhere in the country. I just love it, I meet so many people. But I don't know, I can't make plans for long times. . .

MONIQUE

Getting to work at first was difficult, I'm the kind of person who when they decide to do something will do it, even if it takes a lot of detours I'll get there in the end. Everywhere I went they wanted experience and how could I get experience if I couldn't get work? I started in a factory making door handles. I've been at this job, putting glue on zippers, for six months, before that I was an assembler, putting the two parts of the zipper together. This new job is quieter, and I make more money —

\$2.64 an hour, before it was \$2.43. I take home \$96 a week, I've been working since I was sixteen, that's seven years. I like my job very much, especially the people I work with, and it's interesting. But this job is the end of the line for me. The next would be a floor lady, but I don't want that because there are too many problems and too much responsibility. Now I can talk to everyone, but if I was a floor lady, there'd be too much separation, like a teacher with school kids. If one day they send me on my way I won't look for another job.

ANN

I'd love to get married and have kids back home, but let's face it, it depends on who you're going to marry and where he's going to go. That's the way it is, unless a whole lot of things change.

ANITA

I wanted to get back to school and take commercial, but I applied too late, so I ended up working for Newfoundland Tel as an operator. That was okay for a while, so when I came up here I started working for Bell. That's really a great job, too. But I've got an application in at school again, because I don't really want to spend the rest of my life dialing numbers. I don't get too much out of being an operator. I don't think I'm getting any more knowledgeable and I don't feel that I know very much. But a lot of my friends don't see that.

Second to families in wielding power over young women are schools. Purely the amount of time spent in school is a mighty force, regardless of what transpires within its doors. The need to succeed in school in order to get ahead, to please parents, teachers and to some extent peers, means that students either learn to subscribe to that environment and what it conveys, or

become outcasts. Subscription means, as in the family, generally docile behaviour, and playing the expected sexual roles.

MARIAN

Really I've always been a feminist. Originally I was battling my school. Girls got less physical education and in music we had to sing hymns and chorus songs, while the boys sang pop music. I loved soccer, and we didn't get to play it. I was charging the school for making me a physical derelict. We had to wear dresses, too. When it was cold we were allowed to wear pants to school, but we had to take them off. Finally, we all just wore them and we got detentions and stuff, and we had to go to the office, but we did it for three weeks and finally we got rid of the dress code. We could wear pants after that.

I really got branded as a women's libber in grade eight. Then I started a drama course downtown, and while I was downtown I'd go to the "Y" and then I joined a consciousness-raising group. That was really a good thing. Except that I started running away from home. There's one feminist in my school, but I had to leave school in order to find her. It's sort of a hush-hush subject. There's a lot of hassles. When it snows, there's one guy that hates me, he throws snowballs at me and yells "women's libber". Luckily he's a lousy thrower. In my home room I'm classified as a lesbian. I think a lot of the girls agree with me except they wouldn't like to be so outspoken.

Schools serve societal needs, rather than individuals. We require various levels of training to meet the demand for workers, and schools provide people for all levels. Our institutions do not easily permit individuals

to move from one predestined level to another, mainly because there is no time for individual attention.

John Buttrick's study "Who Goes to College?" in *The Politics of the Canadian Public School* groups students into four categories. Group One is the smallest in number and includes mostly children of professionals and managers. The income level drops to its lowest in Group Four which has the greatest number of students from poor working-class homes. The percentages attending university from each group decrease dramatically as the parental income and occupation drop down the scale. From Group One 54 per cent of the high school graduates go to university, and from Group Four, 12 per cent attend. In other words, the child of an accountant, lawyer or engineer has more than four times the likelihood of being in the university-aimed program than has the child of a labourer, or a person on welfare or Mother's Allowance. (This last group has the poorest chance of all.)

The survival of the institutions themselves becomes a factor in programming and administration, outweighing larger social considerations. In the fight for students, social concerns are forgotten. An example is the community colleges which offer in abundance courses in waitressing, beauty culture, log cabin building and mechanics to take the place of on-the-job training. Very traditional skills are offered almost entirely to one sex or another. Says Diane Melanson, counsellor at Algonquin College in Ottawa, "The institutions don't see it as their role to change — they implement the existing social standards. There is no set policy to encourage new options for women." Even counsellors are in a delicate position. "We have to take the students at their word. We can't say, You're

not planning ahead . . .” Most students at this large college are from working-class backgrounds and are most likely to be those who do not attend university for financial or intellectual or social reasons. “The idea is reinforced that for girls time is short. They want to get out to work and have money in their pockets. Long training is a waste of time . . .” To these girls, working is a pastime before marriage, in many cases, and possibly “something to fall back on.” The college has started a come-back program for older women who want second careers, but here also choices are in traditionally female areas, and it is like bailing with a thimble when there is no attention given to young women in the provision of first careers.

Although education is upheld as the twentieth century’s hope for mass change, educators admit neither the responsibility nor the authority to change attitudes. Reva Dexter, Special Adviser on Sex Discrimination with the British Columbia Department of Education, sees this as the major moral issue in education today. “The unwritten rule for teachers has been that anything to do with ‘values’ should not be taught in schools,” Ms. Dexter states. (‘Values’ include feelings, beliefs, and controversial subjects.) This rule is enforced by the still not-infrequent examples of teachers incurring the wrath of parents by showing pictures of human genitalia or discussing Darwinism. “Do we give teachers the responsibility to direct kids in ways which may be more realistic, but will work against parents’ ideas?”

When it is pointed out to educators that they *are* teaching values, simply by reinforcing the accepted norms; i.e., middle-class, sexist values, reaction is chiefly unconcern. “Our curricula is sexist to the extent that we

all live under sexist standards,” Dexter insists, but change is slow to come because only with specific, overt instances of discrimination can she initiate action. For example, when two new books were introduced last year she found that only two of all the stories were about girls. The books were removed, but Dexter feels that real change in the system can only come through convincing people who train teachers that attitudes are as important as cognitive areas, that teachers must be trained not to convey biases, and, ultimately, that the school must confront attitudes.

Ms. Dexter finds the lack of feminist activity in high schools disappointing, but not surprising. “The movement is fairly intellectual, and political. Students are more involved in their emotional relationships. The movement says you’re all wrong, you must start from scratch and base your identity on different things. This is too scary, these young women are just becoming ‘women’ which in their expectations usually means pretty, flirtatious, popular.”

Redefinition of sex roles cannot take place where roles are indistinguishable from sexuality, as is shown to be the case in high schools, where women’s liberation often is misread to mean homosexuality. And where young men, whose approbation and affections the women need, are defining themselves in manly, “macho” terms, probably more than at any other age.

You can’t grow into and out of a sex role simultaneously; it seems you have to become one thing at a time. Added to the task of defining sexuality in these years are the difficult decisions for future work or study, and the two tasks naturally confuse each other. As counselor Melanson suggests, “At 14, choices are made which

are difficult to go back on. Girls, many of them, don't think of working long-term, and see nothing wrong with waitressing or secretarial jobs." The tragedy is that many of these women will work for almost their entire adult lives, and by 24, they're bored and it's almost too late to change. "If there were some way career choices could be made at 22, you might find female representation much higher in all occupations," says Melanson.⁽¹¹⁾

CHRISTA

I am back at school now to finish high school because I want to go to music school and I also want to be a nurse. I need my grade 12, but I hate it and I want out, but I know I have to get it. I miss school a lot, and my teacher said if I missed any more he'd have to kick me out. That's how irresponsible I am. I can rationalize that by saying I'm only 18 years old and I've got the rest of my life. Just think, in three years I could be a nurse. The teacher offered me a week off school to get my divorce together. I'm going to Vancouver during that week, for a holiday. I can't take all the bureaucratic bullshit. It's like being a kid again. One day the teacher looked at me in class, I was talking, and said, Christa, shut up. I burst into tears. I mean, he was right, but I can't take that kind of . . . humiliation. He's always winking at me, too.

Dexter says, "It used to be more girls than boys dropped out of high school. But in the past three or four years

there has been a reversal. Girls are staying through in greater numbers than boys."⁽¹²⁾ More women than men are now finishing grade 12. They are coming closer to men in university attendances rates, but are generally dropping out of the system faster than men after high school.

This varies with region: for example in the Yukon, the Education Department estimates that only five per cent of those who start primary school finish high school. Says teacher Les Pearson, "There is no tradition here of higher learning. University is something a few people go away to and never come back. It's not visible." The same can be said for women and higher education; there are not enough visible models who have followed this path. The system of education itself is biased against the success of women — in some areas, from the first grade upward, and it unfailingly represents the feelings toward women of teachers and administrators, which are certainly not guaranteed to be enlightened.

CHRISTINE

I dropped out of high school in grade ten. I hated it, because I didn't get along with our principal. He told us he couldn't stand kids, and he used to line us up and

⁽¹¹⁾ Miss Melanson's comment is born out by a study done by the Ontario Women's Bureau in 1968, which showed "occupational views of teenaged girls appeared to be more restricted in scope than those of women over 20" — 53 per cent of teenage girls felt a woman could handle a "high" job such as bank manager or manager of a store while 64 per cent of women over 20 felt that such a job could be done by a woman.

⁽¹²⁾ Figures not available for British Columbia. A similar trend is revealed in a 1974 Toronto Board of Education research report, which showed that the annual dropout rate for Toronto high schools is 24 per cent (double that of more homogeneous metropolitan and suburban areas like the city of Hamilton and the Borough of North York. 56 per cent of the dropouts are boys; 44 per cent are girls. For both sexes, only 40 per cent of the students entering grade nine graduate from grade 12, and only 20 per cent get a grade 13 diploma. Of the girls who drop out, six per cent are classified as "home-makers" who give the reason that they want to marry and raise a family and do not see school as a means to that aim. The report says "a small proportion" are pregnant when they leave school.

give us the strap. My dad went to grade three, he's smart, but they had to live at the school then, and his sister died from TB in the school so his parents took all the other kids out. That was when the natives had to sit on one side of the classroom and the whites on the other. Anyway, our parents wanted us to further our education.

MONIQUE

I quit school after grade nine, because it was boring. I didn't like it, I'd go to school and do nothing, it was doing nothing for me. I was bored and besides it cost me quite a lot to go to school, I was spending money for car-fares and lunches. I thought I'd get some money together. I got this job in the factory because I didn't want to work in an office and be a secretary. That would be boring too.

For those who stay in school, the high school becomes a self-contained world, so foreign to outsiders that we can hardly judge what is happening within. Returning to the institution I left as a graduate nine years ago, I found changes almost everywhere but not the changes I sought. The school has sprawled in the past years, and students' cars crowd the curb space for blocks around. A new school further west has taken up the university suburbs and higher income areas, so that now the school serves mainly middle- and working-class students. It maintains high academic standards — 65 per cent of its graduates are eligible for university.

This is Calgary, and down-filled ski jackets and jeans are everywhere. Nine years ago was the heyday of Joe College dressing and sororities and fraternities. Students look different now, especially women. As sociology teacher Pam Leavitt says, "When I first came here, nine years ago, I could look at a class and pick out who

was in a frat, who had it made. Now they all look the same, you can't pick out who is in the 'in' group or the 'out' group. They all wear jeans and T-shirts." Sororities effectively died after a School Board regulation was passed that forbade Greek-letter jackets and sweaters to be worn in schools. "There's not the prestige in being a football player that there used to be; there's no prestige in being a cheer-leader." Where I wonder is the prestige? It must be there. Maybe it lies in being the most indistinguishable from all the rest. "Dating has changed, the group has taken over," adds Ria VanderVelt, a physical education teacher. "A lot of girls do things in groups — you don't have to sit around and wait for a guy to phone you, you can go out and do it yourself, girls go to the bar themselves." Drug use is down, drinking is up, teacher-student relationships are less formal, some say students are undisciplined. (There is some resistance and rebellion under the seemingly placid surface of this school. When the school caretakers went out on strike in early 1975, the school was vandalized badly by students, and was forced to close its doors because of repeated flooding in hallways and defacing of the property.)

So what does all that mean, except that trappings of a counter-culture of rebellion and free living have infiltrated the middle-income residential areas as a style without a cause? As one sad young man told me, "There's a lot of people with long hair now that I don't even want to know." He seems to miss some cultural myth that was once attached to this style, and to this age group.

Two years ago in the school yearbook, ambitions for the future turning up most often were happiness, travel and freedom. To only a few did "ambition" mean

doctor, lawyer or fireman. Last year, "ambition" was dropped altogether from the copy, but they're putting it back in this year, and if counsellor Val Norman is right, it will mean making some money, enjoying themselves, mostly fitting in and getting what they can as easily as they can. What this means for women is fairly clear. The feminism that came on the heels of that student rebellion way back when they were ten, (remember when women of the civil rights leftist groups got tired of typing letters?) missed entirely in this group. The new noise about women's liberation in the media is making an impression, though, and it is colliding with the norms of teenagehood.

Pamela Leavitt says her women students don't know what they want. "They recognize that families are unstable, but they want love and security, they want their parents to discipline them, they want the traditional family to provide all the needs. They talk a lot about free love and drugs, but they come down to, yes, I want to get married to one man, and, yes, I want to stay home and I don't want to be a working mother. I think they're really torn between what society wants to sell them and what they basically want and need." These young people have seen cynicism pre-packaged, they know about more than they want to know. They discuss rape, abortion, communal living in class and then go home, watch TV, bowl, go to parties and listen to records in a careful re-creation of early 1960s teenage life.

"They don't get any direction or guidance from their parents as to what their role as a woman is," says Leavitt. "They all have the idea of the housewife, rollers in the hair, dirty old robe, and they don't want that. They don't want to be the working mother whose

children are neglected. They'd like to be content as a mother, but society now tells them they can't be content as a mother."

Guidance counsellors Jan Braun and Val Norman estimate that 70 per cent of these students have mothers who work full- or part-time, because two salaries are needed in this middle-income district. They suggest that there is a backlash of resentment against mothers who took jobs midstream, leaving the children feeling abandoned. Yet they also estimate that 80 per cent of the students themselves have jobs, because they want independence and money, and the students themselves feel that, after 14, "home is just where you go to eat and stuff." Mrs. Braun sees student aims in life as: to get a job they enjoy, and with girls, a good solid marriage. Women don't generally see themselves as lifetime members of the labour force, and still worry about the length of training they undertake. And while there are more women expressing interest in forestry, accounting, marine biology, medicine and law, apart from the high academic students who seem to plan futures more thoughtfully, the traditional vocations are still in force. A mediocre student sees clerical training as the only feasible solution, often, because to be an electrician or businesswoman is too radical a change. Of course, the self-fulfilling prophecies of "interest" tests are still doing their work in putting young people into the expected slots. (Would you like to work on people's hair? Maybe. Then why don't you be a hair-dresser?)

The schools present a double bind for women. To achieve and perhaps get away from traditional limitations, a woman must submit to and excel in a structure which is basically sexist. Many women who succeed to

the extent of becoming lawyers or doctors are indoctrinated against their own sex. They maintain they have done nothing extraordinary, they do not believe in "women's liberation", and they hold dearly to certain "feminine" practices to prove their conformity. The women who want everything—those with what Wand and Burshtyn call "lack of realism in the assessment of opportunities"—set themselves up for a dual-role future ("I'm not going to spend six to eight years studying and then end up cooking all my life, but I'm also not going to give up children.") which, without help from a mate and new institutions like daycare, is suited only for a superwoman. And yet, in a class of university-calibre sociology students, far more than half of whom are statistically bound to work after marriage, nearly all disapproved strongly of daycare, and of the woman who "abandoned" her pre-school children. Even after a child is of school age, many felt that a mother should stay home. "Working mother" is as connotatively unpleasant to them as "housewife". Their attitudes to abortion, while not necessarily indicative of their attitudes to women in general, showed the same almost-punitive approach. "A girl who gets herself in that position should have to pay the consequences" was the feeling upheld by more than half the group, despite one woman's strident opposition: "Get yourself in that position and see how you feel then!" which was rather to the point.

Likewise, these students unrealistically held the view that, if a person cannot afford a child, and the luxury of being a full-time stay-at-home parent, she should not have one. They say that the state has no responsibility for those who have children and need to work. It doesn't add up to a consistent view of the future. Perhaps it just means they are discussing matters of

which they can have no real feeling yet. Perhaps hostility is growing out of confusion.

Dr. Casselman at Carleton sees the same resentment of working mothers in university students, and the same ambivalence in the woman who considers a career but who still sees that she must bear the burden of the family. "Many of the girls I see are floundering in terms of their careers; they are not thinking of a job which they will give up, but they are getting into difficulty because they have not shed the mantle (of traditional expectations.)"

SEX, LOVE AND ALL THAT...

Ask a teenager about her career or her education—there is an air of unreality to the answer. The world beyond the peer group is out of range; schools, offices, the like are manipulated from above. In her developing sexual self there is reality, however. She feels that she controls it herself; her attractiveness and her emotions are immediately definable in her own terms. This is where the answers to all those questions lie. Out of the realm of older people, in the privacy of a male-female relationship, she is "free" to be herself, even though her romantic concerns are, more than she is willing to admit, controlled by images inherited from media and culture. The search for love is the most exciting teenage exploration and the most difficult, the most painful, and certainly the most time-consuming.

ANITA

A guy I was going with back home moved up here, too. But I don't really go out with him now because, like, we were really serious at one time, but it'll never be like it was before, now we're up here. I'm going out with this

guy now who I met at work, he's very nice. Valentine's Day he came up with two dozen flowers, I almost cried. He takes me out for dinner, too.

MARIAN

The hassle is trying to find a guy that's okay. When I come on to anybody I come on really strong, and guys can't stand it. Really, high school students are ultra-conservative. I don't fit in properly.

ANN

I don't have any steady right now. I don't want one. I'm a big flirt and I can't be any other way.

Dr. Casselman's feeling is that university women experience freedom in the new sense almost entirely in sexual terms. Young women come to her with anxieties brought on by feelings of inadequacy, for sexual liberties have often not brought satisfaction and this feeds back badly on their self image. She sees so much pregnancy that she is initiating a study to determine if it is at some level a deliberate "accident", caused by a need to prove womanhood. Her feeling is that there is less cohabitation than several years ago, but that, ironically, attitudes to marriage are as unrealistic as a decade ago. "Despite the many unhappy marriages they see in their parents' generation, they still want the storybook image of the union."

It is true that despite contract marriage, "shacking up" and high divorce rates, young people are marrying just as much as ever, and younger than ever. It isn't surprising, considering that future love, romance and marriage have been dangled before young women as their ultimate glorification since early childhood. Bride dolls, bride magazines, the primevera image of woman-

hood budding through love consolidated gives the average girl the fantasy of becoming her very own Mrs. Canada. The mystique has not faded; in fact, the "new" marriage may be more sentimental and romanticized than ever. High school students see marriage as the beginning of a new life — before and after, like in the ads. Some marry young, some are disappointed, and others settle happily into marriage for years. Others continue to look forward to it, a "some day" thing that they may try to see realistically, but that steadily resists analysis, for romance and realism are incompatible.

ANITA

Eventually, I'd love to get married and have kids, but not yet. I want to make something of myself, I want a career, even when I get married. I go crazy sitting at home all day. I would like very much to get married when I'm about 26, and not have kids then for a few years. I'd like to work first so that I could have lots of things for the kids and a nice house, and I'd like to have my career so that when they grow up I could always go back to work.

MONIQUE

I met my husband by the telephone. He was a guitar player with a band and we were hiring a band. I went out with him five years before we were married, when I was 21. When we are more settled, I'll quit work and have children, two probably. I don't know if I'll work after the children, it's too far away, time will tell. My husband helps with the housework if I'm too tired. Every week he does something.

ANN

And then you've got to think of something too, look at the rate of divorce.

ANITA

I wouldn't marry anybody who I didn't honestly believe I loved. I'd think very seriously about it, am I going to spend the rest of my life with this person?

ANN

Yeah, I'd think about it too, but then you don't know what circumstances are going to come up.

ANITA

But if you think about divorce all the time, you'll never get married and you could be the loneliest person in the world. You could be 70 years old and look around and say, how did this happen, I've got nobody. A lot of people say a lot of things now, they don't need to get married, but deep down inside, I bet they'd love to have a family and stuff. And they do, most of them get married. That's just how it is.

MARIAN

I think marriage is almost totally out, because I don't think I could find anything in it. I've seen some really crappy marriages, and lately I've been thinking I'd like to spend at least stretches, like a year, of my life totally alone.

CHRISTINE

I'm from a big family, there's thirteen of us kids. I think we turned out pretty good, too. Myself, when I get married I think five or six kids is the limit.

JEAN

If only we didn't have these terrible romantic ideas of love and pain and tragedy and hope and desperate togetherness, that's what we're fed on all our lives, that's why we're stuck in this bind . . .

Increased sexual freedom (and it is a reality, due to attitude change, or easing of availability of contraception, or both) seems not to have dispelled the romance around sex, love and marriage. In a survey carried out in Kingston by the Department of Community Medicine of Queen's University, it was found that almost 40 per cent of 14-year-olds surveyed and 80 per cent of 18-year-olds were non-virgins. That's for females — the figures for males were higher. The comments collected in the sample of 13- to 19-year olds revealed that the old double standard is still operating. The females mention love, serious relationships, responsibility and even marriage, while the males mention only enjoyment, occasionally the girls' responsibilities, and very occasionally their own responsibilities. Females as well seemed to be bargaining, saying "You have to have sex if you want to keep your boyfriend," or "Boys don't understand that I don't want sex." A Calgary high school student explained her sexual activity the same way: "That's what all the guys want, there's no way you can get around it."

Regardless of whether this is an accurate statement of the situation, or the women are denying their own sexual desires, it does not speak of sexual freedom for the young woman, but rather of a bargaining situation and a double standard which perhaps brings more pressure on them than before the so-called sexual revolution. In these young people, attitudes have not kept pace with practice, and their behaviour is still bound over with the moral strictures inherited from their elders, even though sexual activity seems indeed to be greater in this age group now than it was in decades before.

The survey in Kingston revealed a very high number of chances being taken, and in fact over 80 per cent of the

subjects had had intercourse at least once with no precautions, mostly thinking “it would be unlikely they would get pregnant.” The Calgary student recounted harrowing tales of her friends waiting for their periods each month, agonizing over whether they had “slipped”. Although in large centres, abortion has made less common the high school tragedy of the girl who gets pregnant and “has to get married”, such is not the case in more isolated parts of the country. In Whitehorse, where the teenage pregnancy rate is very high, abortions were severely cut back last year, and grade 11 students dropping out of school to have babies is almost common.

ANN

A lot of our friends from high school, well, they've either left or they got married and have kids. About half our class are either married or engaged. Cause that's where it's at, you leave high school, you get married, you settle down and have kids, that's traditional.

ANITA

Georgina, she got married to a milkman and had twins. She dyed her hair black one week and blonde the next and she didn't cover the roots. A lot of them probably didn't even want to get married, but they got pregnant and their parents say, you gotta get married. I know a couple of kids who probably did have abortions, but no one knows. Most of them probably would think twice on it, because of being Catholic. I'm sure even now there's stories about us back home, about why we left. People are gonna talk . . .

ANN

A lot of people hide what they did, I mean, they slept with guys, but no way, not us, no way! Like the lady

next door, she's the first one to talk, she puts anybody down who would sleep with some guy. Her daughter ran away from home and came up here and got married 'cause she was pregnant, 'cause she knew her mother would practically kill her. And yet her mother was pregnant before she got married, with this girl! I don't come right out and tell my parents, but they know. And they think we're smart enough to watch, so we won't get pregnant. My mother's a nurse, so she told us about birth control. But a lot of people back home never told their kids, and we don't get it in school, not from the priests.

Romance remains the rationale for sex, for all behaviour in fact. It is the opiate, the real life, the compensation, the way out. Love makes it all better — a new man means a new self, a higher social status, the “independence” of marriage. The freedom to act as individuals perhaps. With each other, man to woman, the young experience their own freedom which is independent of political movements and social structures. Women find in romantic love, new individuality and power, which can be used as a rebellion against authority, and has all the charm of secrecy, illegitimacy and sorcery. And love, as well, sweeps you off your feet. You are no longer responsible when you're in love. You do foolish things, alter your plans. For girls, then, falling in love can not only be a way of finding an identity, it is an acceptable way of avoiding responsibility for decisions which are increasingly complicated.

CHRISTA

I suppose my life revolves around the man I'm with. Between my last two men, there was a gap in time, and I was really bummed out knowing that I didn't have any-

body who really cared about me. Suddenly along came this new man, and I felt great. I have loads of girl friends, but that kind of love doesn't seem real to me. Falling in love does make it all better, for a while.

Again, the exceptional woman, who has learned, probably through the family, to see herself as a self-sustaining person, recognizes the conflict she faces. She is on unmarked ground in attempting to deal with it, for many career women twenty years her senior have either settled for playing two roles, or have kept the household and working lives a matter for private attention only.

MYRA

I'd like to combine work and marriage if I can. I don't know if I'll be able to, but I'd like to make a stab at it. If I were to have a steady boyfriend now it would detract from my studies. If I had one I'd have to make some decisions that I'm not ready for yet. In the media if you want to get ahead, you can't drop out or else you get behind. But I wouldn't want my marriage to fail because of work. I suppose people come first. I'd like to have children. I was brought up Catholic and you're supposed to have however many kids come along. Three or four would be enough for me. I see Adrienne Clarkson on TV and I think she has kids, I'm not sure, but she seems to be making a success of it. I'd like to be like her. My mother and I have constructive arguments about it. I argue for getting out and working. She thinks that if you marry you should devote your time to your children. I see her side and she sees mine.

So-called sexual freedom is an ambiguous freedom, for it has not been accompanied by freedom from the

myths and stereotypes surrounding marriage and morality. There is still a great gap between professed attitudes and activities, rhetoric and reality, throughout society, a gap which is possibly greatest in the young and inexperienced. True contravention of established sexual manners is very rare as well as very undocumented. Serious experimentation seems to be reserved to the over-30s. You make your mistakes first and ask questions later.

CHRISTA

When we got married what I expected from Bill was security. He was really into working for me and being my old man. I was 15, and we'd go places with his friends, I'd start giggling and having a good time, and all he'd have to do was give me a look, and I'd shut up. I'd let him do that to me. I was afraid of him. Then suddenly I was the mother and he complained that I loved the baby more than him and that I never gave him any attention. When I came home from the hospital with this screaming, colicky baby, he had 18 people in our tiny little house and it was a mess. I scrubbed it all clean and he stood there hassling me. I used to get sick a lot; in fact, I think I used to be a hypochondriac, because that was really the only way I ever got any attention.

Three times I left him, but I didn't have anywhere to go and I came back. He made me feel responsible for his hurt feelings. Finally I left my daughter and got a job and was living with a girlfriend. Bill took the baby to his mother, and then we went to court and I got custody. Twice he came and beat me up and took her away. Bill's no more a fit parent than I am, but I don't want her to be at his parents or at mine. It's really scary, I can't let her get tossed back and forth like that, but where's she going to be? Am I going to freak out again, like the last

time? I took a bunch of pills and ended up in the psych ward. I love my daughter, but when it comes to being her mother and actually looking after her and being responsible for her I can't do it. I know that if I take her back I'm going to freak out again. At one point I was beating her — she was such a burden that I just wanted to rid myself of the burden. I was scared I was going to kill her. I feel like it's her life or mine.

Two years ago I was Bill's wife. I didn't need to do anything. Probably I would have been happy like that if he'd been . . . perfect.

FUTURES

The young woman in the 1970s is very much a woman between revolutions, with no definite youth movement, and few identifying traits. The rest of us are trying so hard to recapture our own youth, to do it over again, that we've almost forgotten the generation we so envy. Blue jeans, dope, and dropping out have been appropriated by the establishment. Feminism, perhaps the only true cultural revolution in swing in this decade, is also mainly the concern of more mature people. While I don't subscribe to the growing feeling that there is a 1950s "backlash" coming over our youth, it would not be difficult to explain it that way. Young women are looking backward, yes, but they also are looking forward and all around for models to follow. They are confused, and their confusion is dulled by apathy — modish apathy which is the result of a kind of overkill, and which may unhappily result in the assumption of attitudes and lifestyles which we ourselves are trying to discard.

MONIQUE

On women's liberation I don't have many opinions. At the factory it's very rare that we involve ourselves in demanding questions. We all have different opinions, but it doesn't change our friendships. There are some good things in it for women, like there are more production openings for me now. But it has not affected me in any way, it can do nothing for me. Things have evolved from the days of my mother, she didn't have a chance for an opinion, she had to let others tell her what to do. Now she can talk as much as a man, and she is listened to. The young today don't discuss things with men, they just go ahead and if they have something to do, they do it.

MARIAN

I went to this . . . convention last summer, and I stood up and talked about daycare, and everybody applauded me, but these people from the news came and I showed up on the TV. That was Monday night, and when my father saw it he came down and told me "Women's liberation around here is this: you do the dishes every day." I ran away for the first time. When I went home the social worker told me I wasn't supposed to say anything. Now I don't want to join another consciousness-raising group for a while because if I do life is going to go into an uproar again and I'd do something drastic.

CHRISTA

One of my biggest trips is worrying about what other people say about me. More than anything in the whole world I want to be real, to be sure of myself.

MARIAN

I'm going to move out when I'm about 17. The one big thing I want now is to get out, the freedom. And, I feel like I owe something to the world in a way, and I should

work to make the world a better place, isn't that like in the '60s? You never hear that anymore, kids want money that's all. For me, becoming a lawyer is really motivated by, well, that I think family law is terrible. I'd really like to do something, to do something that affects something.

Perhaps when today's 18-year-old is 25, she will indeed be different from her predecessors, however. As Fernande Kretz of the Vanier Institute for the Family suggests, "It may be that lack of change is superficial, that there is a change in attitude not manifested at the behaviour level." These years, from 14 to 24, are years for compromise, for creating roles out of others' expectations and personal needs. As the young woman's life moves quickly — she cannot wait for new developments, she takes what she sees around her. The future for women, for her? She doesn't know any more than we do.

MYRA

Some kids really have no opportunities, especially those who leave school early. But the ones who stay in school know what's going on. The women's movement does have some impact on us, through the media. They don't like the new ideas, though, and they are retreating from them. A perfect example is my friend. We were given an opportunity to go to Paris on a class trip, through Heritage Canada. She was the smartest person in school, the one who everyone thought should go into business, and she decided not to go to Paris. She said she had no desire to see Paris. She didn't want to know about anything different, that's all. If you talked to her you would say, this is today's woman, liberated and all that. But she just stayed home and married someone with grade nine education. She decided that people are more important than jobs or learning. She chose to live through people.

JEAN

Now that I have my job, I want to build a career. I think I will always work, because I love it and I need the independence. If I marry, it will have to be to a man who can agree to a new kind of partnership, an equal one, with me. Those men seem to be pretty rare. But it's not the end of the world if I don't meet one. My life will be what I make it now. I feel as if I'm on my way.

ANITA

For us, it's been a choice. You either stay home and do something you don't really want to do, or you have to leave. I'm glad I came up here, 'cause if I didn't I'd still be home, going to work, and the same thing every night; maybe I'd end up married to my old boyfriend. People feel secure, 'cause they know they can get married and have kids, but I don't want that. I respect that, but I don't want it.

MARIAN

I cry a lot. But I get a lot of support lately, I know some teachers and they're really nice to me, I have some pretty good friends, and my mother and I are getting to be really close. My life just keeps on moving, really fast, my life is getting a lot better.

CHRISTA

I want to be able to say, here I am and that's where I'm going to stay. I want to grow and to be loved and to be me. I'm not Christa yet, but I'm getting there.

If there were anything we could make possible for young women it would be the room to be themselves. The options to ask questions, and the freedom to make their own choices.

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A
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Vivian Frankel





























Vivian Frankel









Edith Dalschen













Edith Dalschen





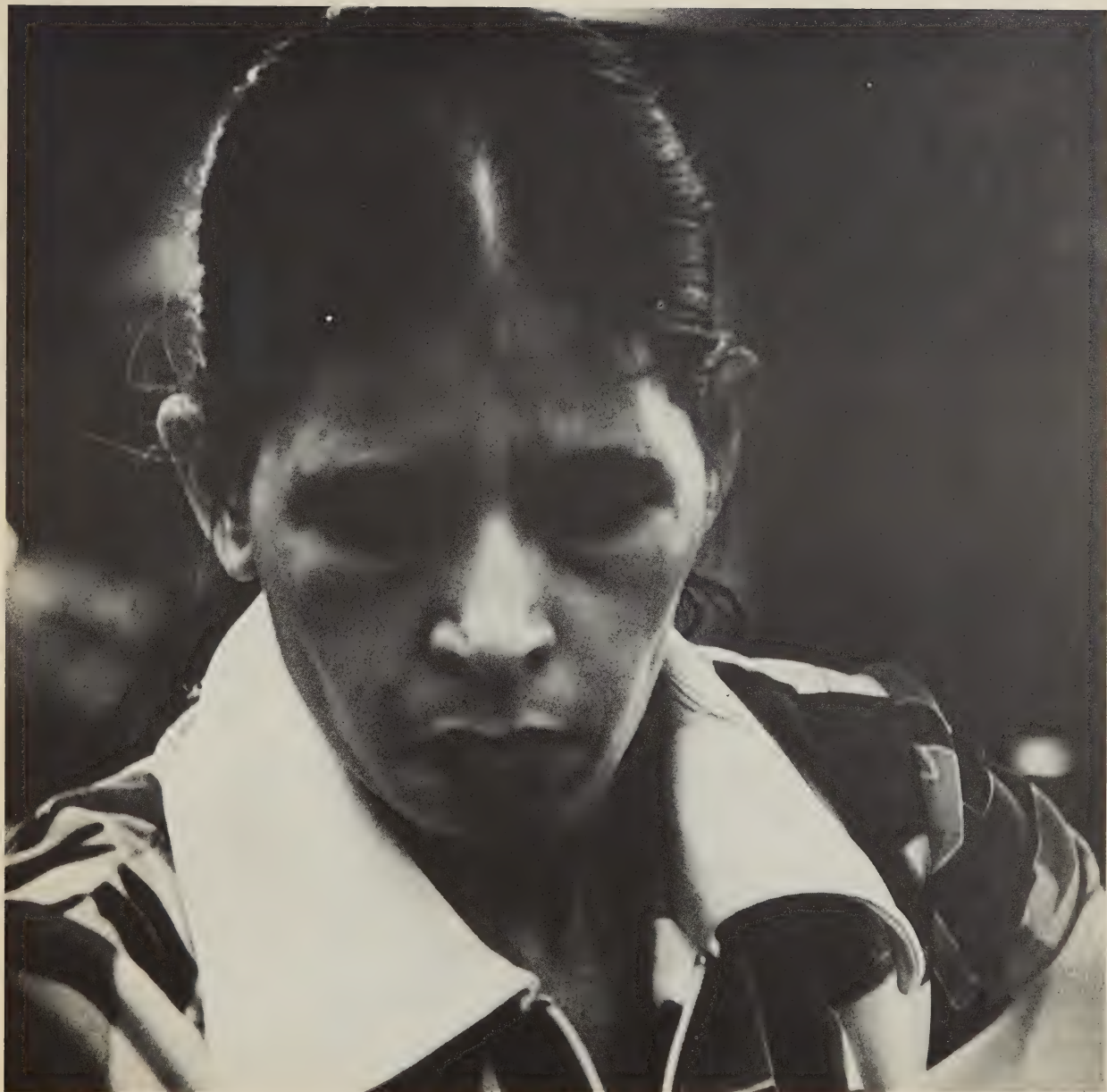






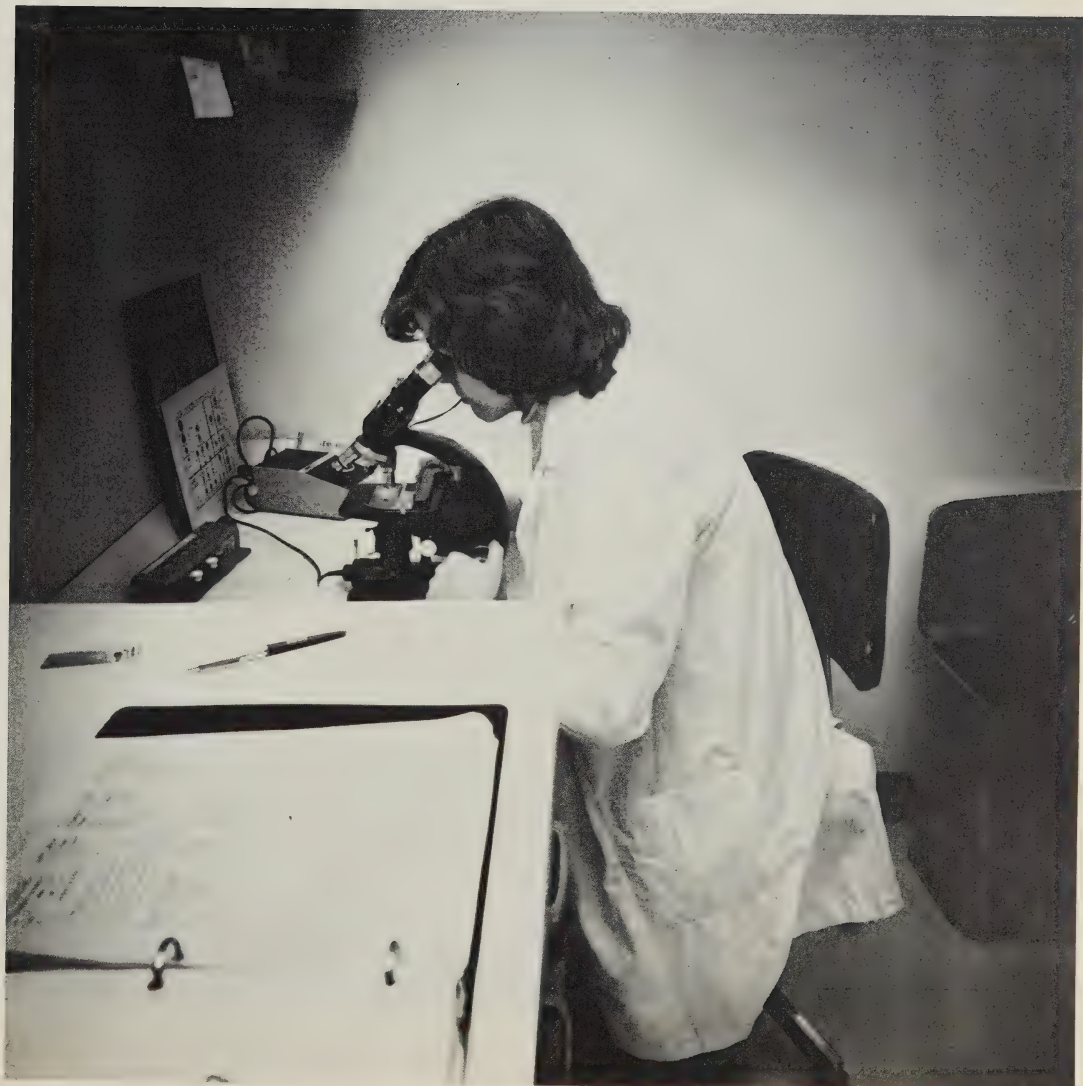






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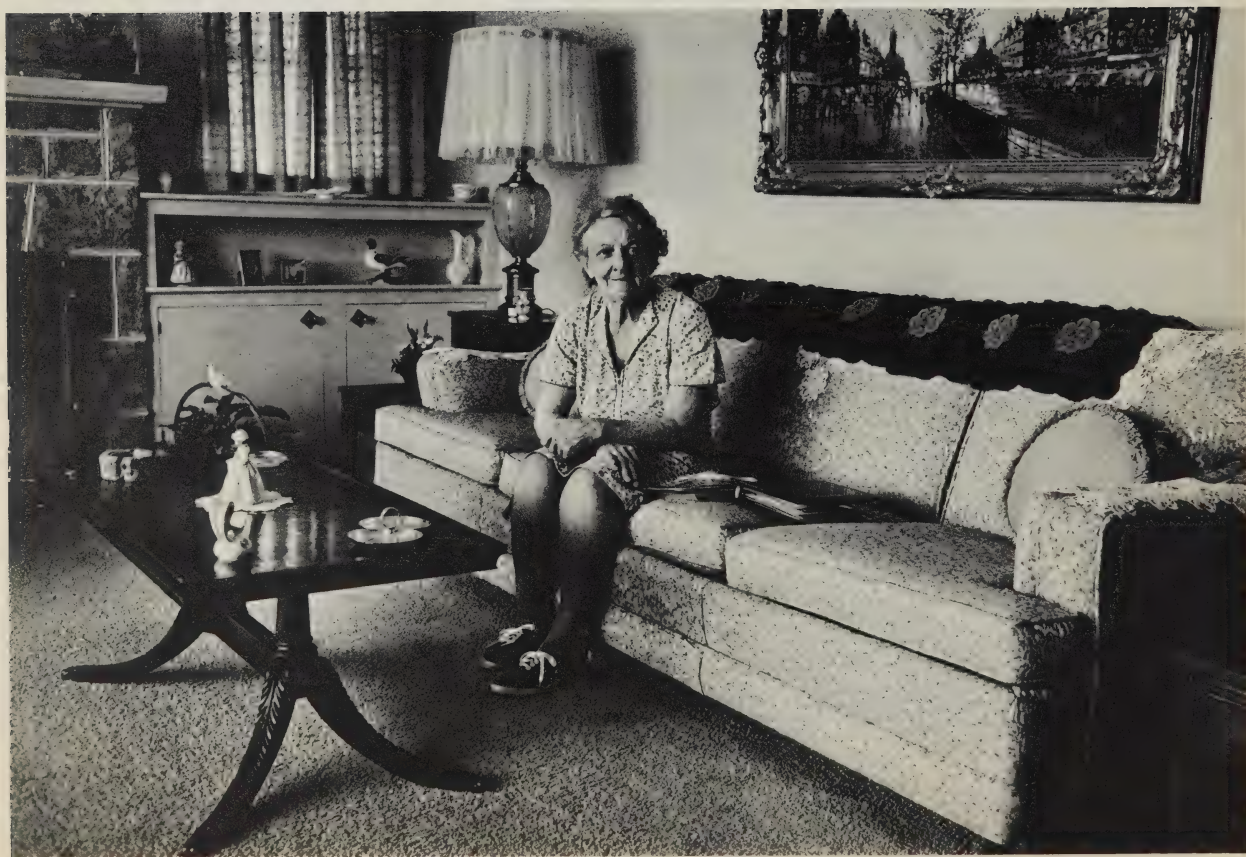




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ABOUT
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THE AUTHORS



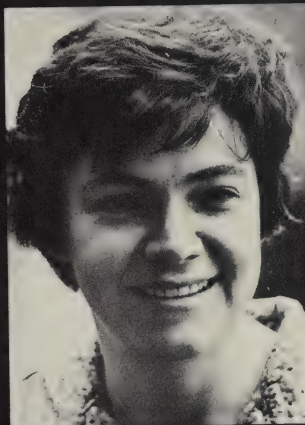
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ABOUT
THE
PHOTOGRAPHERS

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS



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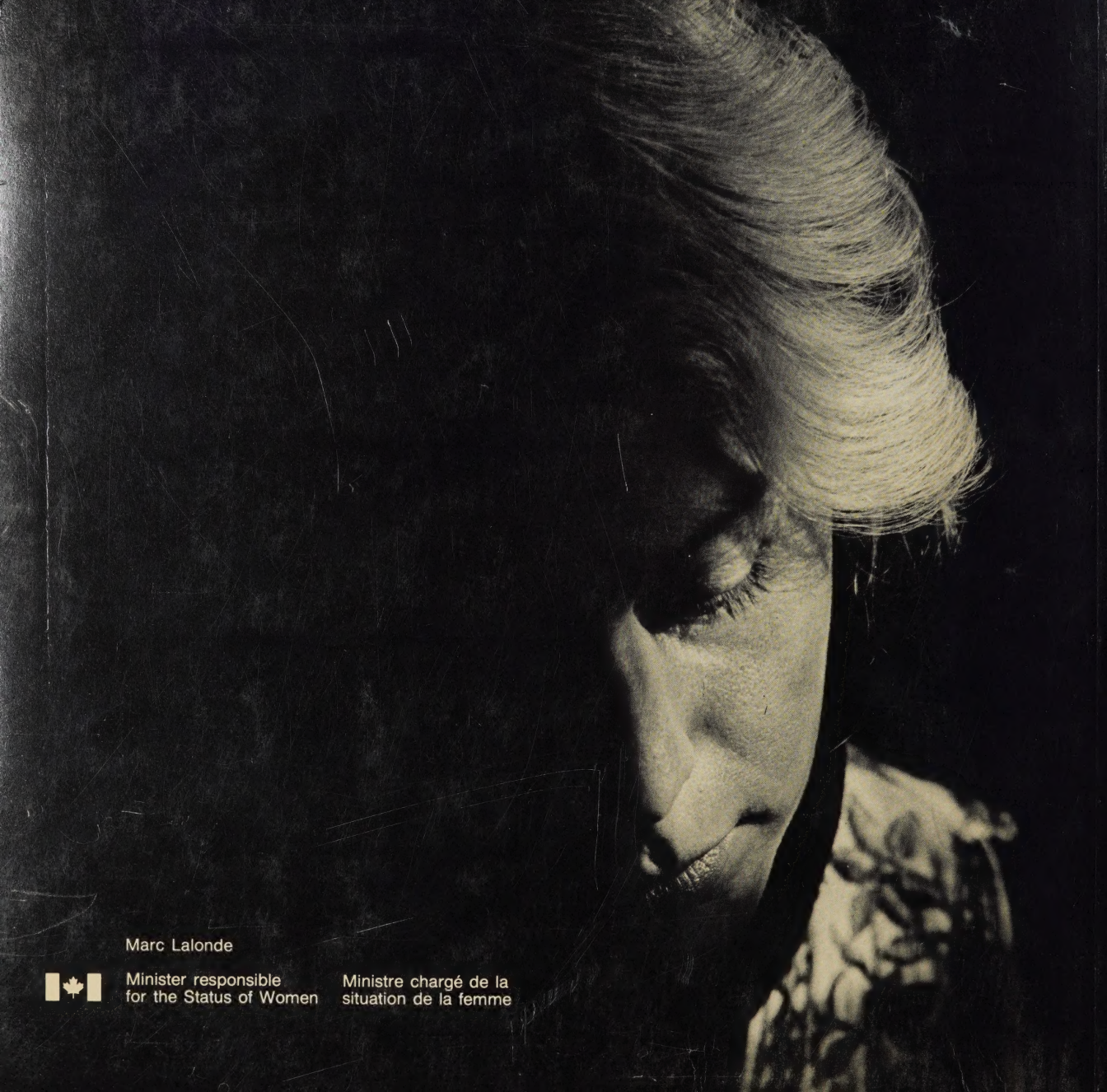
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Marc Lalonde



Minister responsible
for the Status of Women

Ministre chargé de la
situation de la femme